

# Boston Sunday Globe

A special  
24-page  
section

# BLIZZARD '78

All regular  
Sunday sections  
inside

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1978



This special section is an attempt by The Boston Globe to put into perspective for its readers the scope, enormity and devastation of the Great Blizzard of '78.

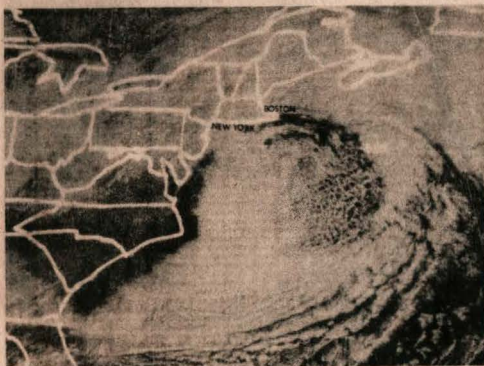
It details in words and pictures how and why the big storm happened, and to whom. It portrays the human tragedy, pathos, courage, sense of humor, resourcefulness and resilience of those caught up in its wild, white fury.

Before it was over, the ordeal proved once again we are capable of swift, decisive and intelligent action in times of crisis.

In a special way, it also brought out the spirit of care and compassion that binds us all together in a community of common need. There were even warming notes of cheerfulness throughout it all.

The section is dedicated to the unfortunate men, women and children who perished in the storm; to those who lost so much but will rise again; to those who gave unstintingly of themselves and their time to help their fellow man; to the state, MDC and local police, the Mass. National Guard and the US Army, and to those millions of Bay State residents who just don't know when to quit.

# FIRST CAME THE WINDS THAT BOWLED US OVER



## It was 5 a.m., Sunday, February 5, 1978.

The teletype machine in the headquarters of the Massachusetts State Police in Boston stuttered, then sprang to life.

The message originated in the National Weather Service office at Logan Airport.

"Snow is expected to spread into the state tonight and continue on Monday... Increasing northeasterly winds tonight and on Monday may cause considerable blowing and drifting... A substantial snowfall may come from it."

Francis Rexroad, the meteorologist who had the message sent to the state police and a host of other private and public agencies who use the service, didn't stop there.

He and his two coworkers on that shift made special phone calls to some of the key ones.

Something was brewing, they said, something big. You better get ready.

Just how bad that "something" would be, however, no one could know that sunny, quiet Sunday in February.

Not Francis Rexroad, not Sister Eileen O'Leary of St. Bartholemew's Parish in Needham, not Michael S. Dukakis of Brookline, not Mrs. Claire Young from Canton, not Dan McWilliams in his Winthrop home, and not Mrs. Madelyn Burdick in her home in the Beachmont section of Revere.

They could not possibly know that within 48 hours something would happen that would forever alter their lives — and in the case of Mrs. Young and 28 other people in Massachusetts, end them.

What was coming was an assault by nature that would wreck whole sections of coastal communities, strand thousands of people on roads under the most harrowing of conditions, cause hundreds of millions of dollars of damage.

It would bring out the very best in many people and the worst in some, it would disrupt the routines of life for everyone, bring people and neighborhoods together in shared misfortune, forge the first genuine personal bonds between a governor and the citizenry, and, for all who lived through it, leave memories that would last forever.

## It began days before, with an extraordinary interaction of the air, the sea, the earth, the sun and the moon.

These all seemed to conspire to make the Great Blizzard of '78 as bad as it could possibly be.

Across the North American continent, air generally moves in soft, wavy bands from west to east.

But on Saturday, those bands buckled over the East Coast and turned north toward Canada, collecting, as they arrived, the dry, cold Arctic air that tends to sit there during the winter.

Then, the layers of air buckled again and headed south, where trouble also just happened to be brewing.

All week, weather watchers had noticed the air pressure dropping in spots off the Carolina coast. Sooner or later, when that happens, a storm forms.

What happens, and did in this case, is that the low pressure area sucks in the surrounding air currents and blows them straight up and out of the mass with great intensity, where they begin to circulate counter-clockwise.

This motion produces energy, enough energy for the system to move north.



For Boston's financial district: it was a blow to pedestrians as they came around the old State House at the corner of State and Washington streets and tried to get from one sidewalk to another.



From above and below, there was no question about a storm brewing. It showed up on a satellite photograph Tuesday as a spiral of clouds. On Monday, it swirled around a Fall River resident as she navigated North Main street.

On the cover: More than 3000 vehicles were buried along Route 128.

But none of this had occurred when Francis Rexroad has that message sent out on Sunday morning. He merely saw the probability of it happening.

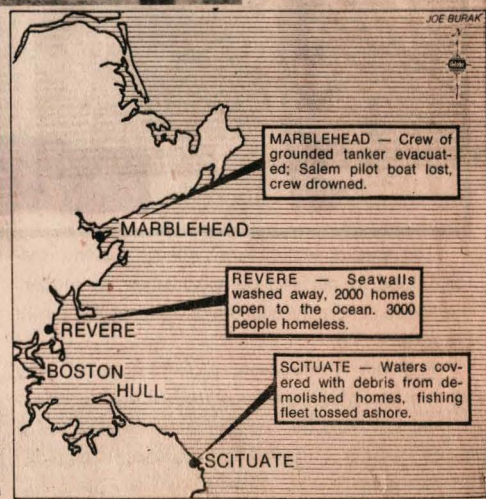
It wasn't until Sunday night and early Monday morning that Rexroad's worst fears began to materialize.

Force A (the warm air storm) met

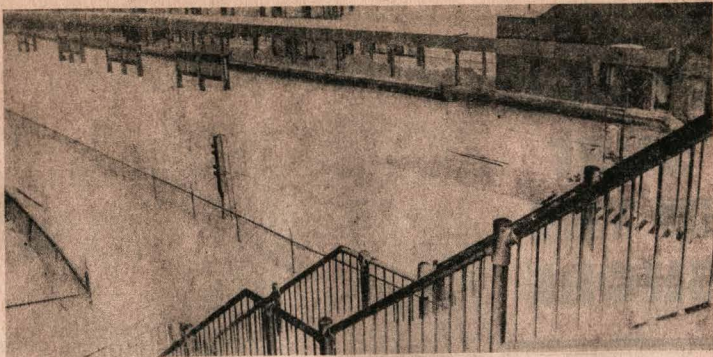
Force B (the cold air mass). More energy, more movement, more wind.

All day Sunday, the messages from the weather service had grown progressively more serious. Then, at ten o'clock Monday morning they became openly ominous:

"Eight to sixteen inches expected in



# THEN CAME THE SNOW THAT STOPPED US COLD



The blizzard put the brakes on transit. By Tuesday morning, the subway cars had quit trying at Columbia station and not a soul was making tracks on Washburn street in Dorchester.



It was harsh walking for homebound firefighter Albert Marshall of Engine Co. 43 on Massachusetts avenue near Columbia road in Dorchester and an unidentified woman on North Main street in Fall River. And it was three against inertia at the corner of Kelton street and Commonwealth avenue in Allston.



most sections. The snow will be accompanied by strong easterly winds resulting in considerable blowing and drifting... Extensive flooding of low-lying coastal areas is expected at time of high tides both tonight and Tuesday morning... Traveling will become very hazardous later today and should be curtailed except in emergency."

That message got to the official clients of the weather service. It did not get to Dan McWilliams, or Claire Young or Madelyn Burdick.

For all they knew, what was happening Monday morning was just another snow storm, with a lot of wind.

After all, hadn't they just come

through a storm barely two weeks before, which had dumped a record 21.6 inches of snow on the Boston area?

They had no way of knowing that this would not be "just another snow storm" — that unusual atmospheric conditions would cause it to become the most devastating blizzard of the century.

By a tragic coincidence, the huge storm was to become stalled over Massachusetts just as it reached peak intensity, trapped by a ridge of cold, heavy polar air to the north.

And as it did, the winds and the sea were to converge in a combined assault that was to wreak havoc on Massachusetts' coastline. With the high tide due

at 10 p.m. Monday, and the sea already whipped to a frenzy by intensifying winds, it just so happened there was a full moon.

The earth, the sun and the moon had moved into relative positions creating their strongest possible pull on the tides.

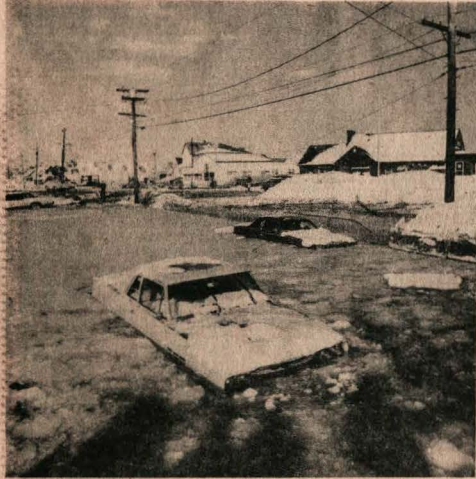
To the people of Massachusetts, this

meteorological monster only became visible as its Sunday punch hit them squarely on the jaw Monday afternoon and evening.

Exposed and helpless, there was only time to try to roll with it and, in thousands of cases, to try to stay alive.

Massachusetts' longest night had begun.

# A VIOLENT AND ANGRY SURF POUNDED THE NORTH SHORE



Revere by the sea became Revere in the sea as the tide flowed through Winthrop Drive and Leverett Avenue in the Beachmont section and the surf leaped nearly as high as the water tower across the bay in Winthrop.

## Madelyn Burdick didn't bother looking out the kitchen window at the sea.

In 15 years of making breakfasts in that same kitchen, Madelyn avoided looking at the sea. It was her enemy. It frightened her. When it came too close, she would feel her heart pounding. When it roared, she blanched.

Sixteen feet behind her, and 20 feet below, the Atlantic Ocean pounded regularly against the rocks along the Revere shoreline. She'd learned, with practice, not to hear the roar, not to see the occasional spray of surf.

If the sea would ignore her, she would return the favor.

But this Monday morning, the storm held a secret. Perhaps its blackness might have given the secret away had Madelyn looked carefully. The sea, this Monday morning, was angry.

Madelyn Burdick shoved 14-year-old Brett out the door and off to Revere High School well before 9 a.m. Her frail but handsome six-year-old, Khris, was playing quietly in the other room. And Andy, her patient husband who'd stood by her all these years, was finding time for a second cup of coffee.

It was a slow time of year for Andy's remodeling business and, if the weatherman was right, there'd be a call later in the day for some snowplowing and the chance to earn a few extra dollars.

By the time Madelyn sterilized her syringe and injected just enough insulin into her arm to keep her diabetes under control, Gerry Villani of East Boston had already been behind the wheel of his truck for two hours.

It was still dark when he climbed out of bed in East Boston and began the trip to Revere. He, too, had heard the weather reports and he looked at the sky for some clue. There wasn't one.

If what they said was right, it was going to be a day of sanding and plowing and more sanding. Probably some overtime. At seven dollars an hour, the money would come in handy.

At 7 a.m. Villani climbed behind the wheel to "236," a huge lumbering MDC plow, and steered out of the truck depot at Revere Beach.

## If Mother Nature had any surprises, Gerry Villani was ready for her.

His truck was a new one, high off the ground, and powerful. It could lick anything Mother Nature offered.

Villani had a theory about why he plowed snow for a living. You didn't get much thanks, but it had to be done. You clear the roads so people can get through. If things get tough, you still clear the roads for ambulances and fire trucks and police cars. And you go

home at night thinking that, just maybe, you saved someone's life.

By noon, the snow was falling and Gerry switched on the sander, its clacking sound making the only noise on the highway. The way the snow was falling, he'd have to drop the plow sooner than he'd hoped. Damn it, he thought.

Revere Police Sgt. John Macdonald whipped the unmarked cruiser around the snowplow, feeling the rear wheels slip for a minute. In a few hours, he thought, driving would be miserable. He wanted to get home before the worst of it hit.

Gerry Villani watched the car disappear into the whiteness in front of him. There was something special about this snow, something furious. He was having trouble seeing where the hell the road went in front of him.



Andy Burdick was having the same problem. The state yard had called looking for his plow at 2 p.m. And now, just a few hours later, he was beginning to wonder if it was worth it. Rush hour had put too many cars on the streets and they were beginning to slide.

He roared through Beachmont Square, narrowly missing an accident. Andy's heart was pounding, his hands shaking as he pulled to the side of the road to call Madelyn.

It was going to be a dangerous storm.

A few miles up the shore, in Nahant, the phone in John Quinn Jr.'s home was ringing. It was the fire station and they wanted him to come to work. It was his day off. As usual, it looked as

though Nahant would be cut off from the mainland at the first high tide. It was a town where you learned to depend on each other. There wasn't anyone else to call.

As darkness settled in along the North Shore of Massachusetts, the ocean roared, the wind whistled and the phones rang. In Winthrop, along Point Shirley, in Revere, in Gloucester and Rockport, in Nahant, each noise was louder than the last.

Andy Burdick called home again at 8:15. There was still no problem, Madelyn said, and high tide was still two hours away.

She looked at the house around her. A ramshackle summer cottage when they bought it in 1963, Andy had

worked hard to make it a year-round home. Two of their children had died while they lived there. There were memories in each room, each piece of furniture. How could she leave?

She looked at her daughter-in-law, Cheryl, who had come to visit, at her six-month-old grandson; at her own son, Khris, a miracle child with congenital heart disease and brain damage who wasn't supposed to live; at Brett, older than his 14 years.

Even if they had to leave, how would the children manage it?

Madelyn Burdick heard the water before she saw it.

It rushed over the seawall at 8:30 p.m. in Revere. In Winthrop, in Nahant, it carried sand and boulders with it. It slapped at the little house at 15 Ocean

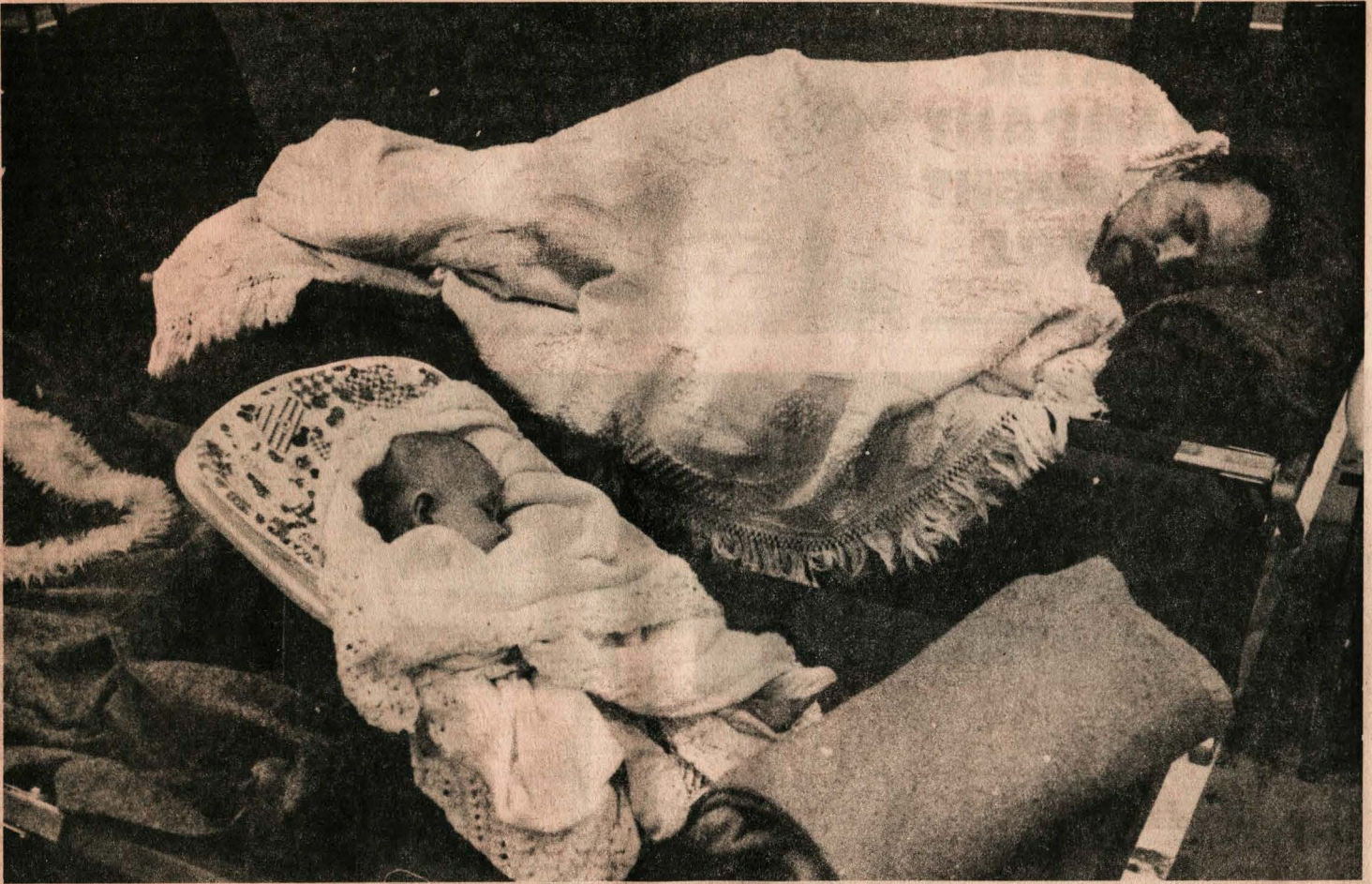
View av. It smashed through a cinder block wall in the garage next door. It picked up the cars inside and hurled them 200 feet like toys.

Cheryl began slipping snowsuits onto the younger kids.

It was time to leave.

The houses in Beachmont are close together, crammed together by people who want to be near the ocean. There are houses and driveways and streets. No backyards with swing sets. No lawns to mow. No smooth, flat areas where the water might gather.

The ocean poured, three and four feet deep, down the streets, between the houses and into the houses. Into hundreds of houses, knocking out heat, light, phones and any hopes of safety.



The storm turned Revere residents into refugees, and the city had been homes. The Red Cross provided clothing, and opened its high school to old and young who fled rubble that ambulance crews found friends when the going got rough.



## A wave crashed through Madelyn Burdick's kitchen window.

Waist deep in water, Brett and Cheryl piggybacked the two children to a neighbor's home 100 feet away and to the safety of the attic there. The owners, Bernie and Dotty Wright, were already there. Two other neighbors arrived minutes later. Madelyn stood on her front steps and stared at the water swirling around her.

The fear returned. She couldn't move. Brett and Cheryl dragged her through the freezing ocean, carrying her, dragging her, tugging at her. She slipped and fell under, flailing, helpless.

A hand, a 14-year-old hand, pulled her to safety.

There was no answer when Andy Burdick called his house again at 9:15. Huddled in an attic with no windows, no lights and no heat, his wife, his children and his friends lived in terror for the next five hours. They could hear the rushing water, the howling wind and, every few minutes, a strange thud.

The houses on Ocean View avenue, at least a few of them, were floating. Bumping into each other with a thud.

Bernie Wright punched a hole through a boarded up attic window and began yelling for help. Screaming. Everyone screamed. The wind carried the voice to the driver of an amphibious duck. Madelyn Burdick sat on the engine to keep warm. The duck stalled. A firefighter jumped into the chest-high water and piggybacked her and others

to safety. A trip to Revere High School. A funny, souvenir hat from Miami Beach to keep her warm looked out of place in a building filled with people who had escaped death.

Buddy, the Burdick family dog, slept the night away on a couch at 15 Oceanview av., floating through a deserted living room.

Gerry Villani plowed the night away atop his green and yellow truck, cruising through deserted streets.

Two-three-six was a good truck, one of the few still going when dawn broke Tuesday. As Villani steered toward Beachmont, he turned to his partner, John O'Connell, and wondered when it was going to stop. A police cruiser blocked the road ahead of them. An officer flagged them down.

"There are two people in the water on Broadsound avenue. We have orders that you have to rescue them. It is imperative that you try to get to them. You're the only thing big enough to make it."

Imperative. At seven bucks an hour, few things are imperative. One of those things is saving lives.

When Gerry Villani reached Broadsound, the ocean was lapping at the edge of his cab. He could see the couple, elderly, struggling in chest-deep water. They had fled their home in desperation as the sea continued to pummel away with the returning tide.

They call Gerry Villani "The Weasel" at the MDC yard, but he says that he doesn't know why. He is a short man, just barely over 5 feet, with a friendly grin and a stocky build.

Gerry wheeled the truck as close as possible to the elderly couple and realized that neither had the strength to climb aboard.

Imperative.

He jumped into the icy water, feeling the water seep through his clothes, and lifted the couple aboard. There was a rope tied around their waists, tossed from a neighbor, Frank Paradiso. It was all that kept them from washing out to sea.

He steered the big truck to safety, leaving his passengers at the nearest ambulance, and drove back to Beachmont. There were others, hundreds of others, who needed to be rescued.

## The wave came on the second trip down Broadsound avenue. When it hit, the truck moved sideways and the cab filled with water.

When it hit, the water was above the windows in "236," and the new truck, the pride of the fleet, gave up.

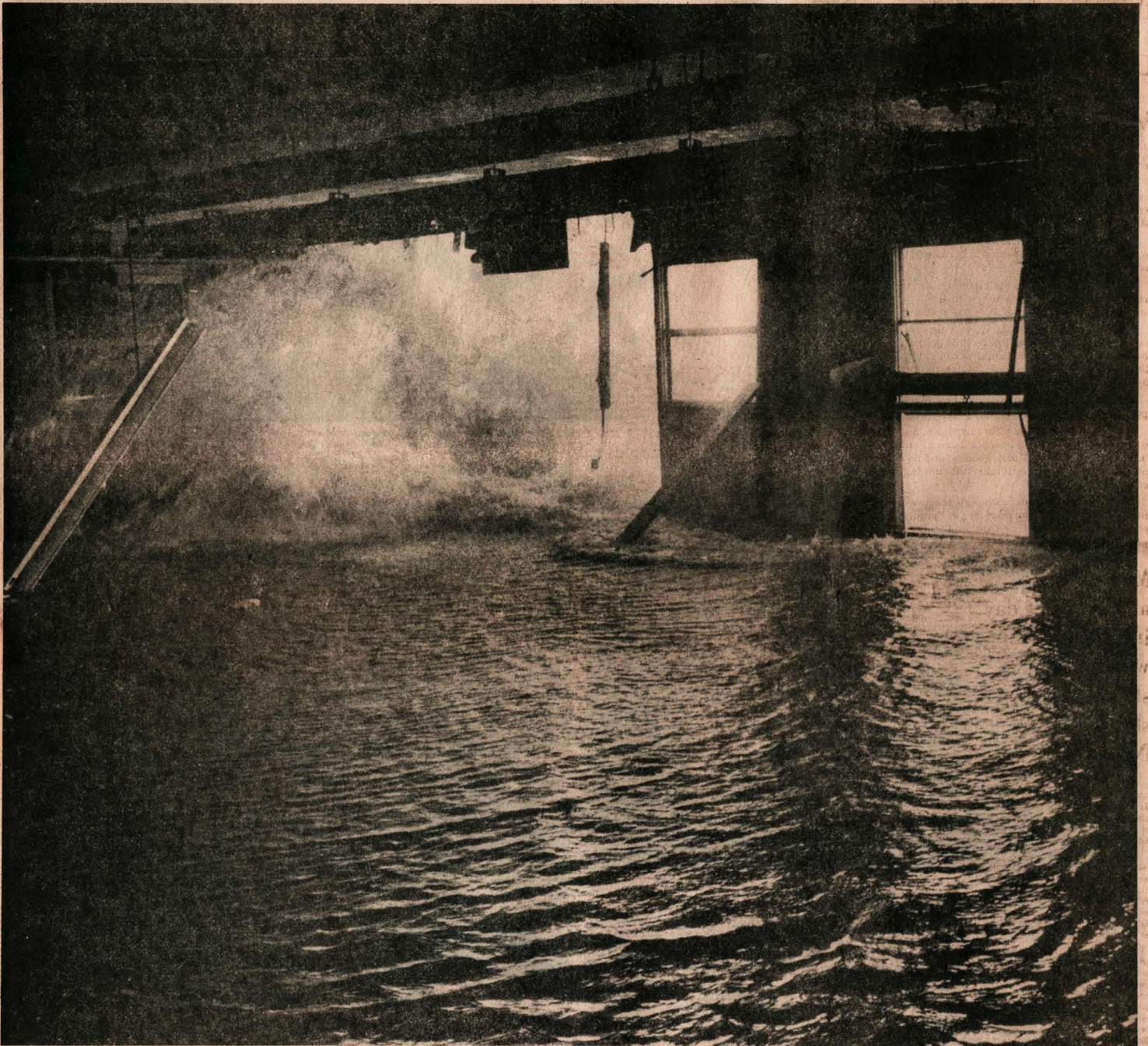
Gerry Villani and John O'Connell climbed from the cab and perched themselves on top of the truck's sanding unit. Water lapped at their feet. For three and a half hours they stood there, jumping up and down, pounding each other to keep warm, convinced that their lives would end atop a drowning truck.



# THE WATER RAN RAMPANT AND WROUGHT ITS HAVOC



Rockport, an artists' colony on Cape Ann, lost its calling card for painters, and Tom Brown and Celeste Archambault almost lost a home. Below, water pours through Ted Hood's sail loft in Marblehead.



## A car floated by. A house drifted toward them.

A boat floated by, out of reach. Forty feet away, in an MDC pumping station, Jack Whitnell was convinced that he could lasso a boat and rescue them.

With the help of others stranded at the station, he captured a passing boat and used a shovel to paddle out to the truck. Villani and O'Connell were saved.

At the other end of the city, Victor Foresta watched the morning tide rip down his street with a force double that of the night before. Vic had lived in the Chamberlain avenue house for nearly a quarter of a century. He'd seen the flood before and he knew what to expect. There was no reason for panic.

He walked to the kitchen, slipped off his ring and wrist watch and began to roll out the pasta dough. He would make ravioli and meatballs and, if the two grown kids ever got home, he'd have something for them to eat. The knock on the door surprised him.

The young woman on the porch car-

ried skis and ski poles. She was a stranger, but she wanted him to know that the house next to his was on fire and it looked as though his might be next.

"You better get out," she said. Foresta donned a warm jacket and a pair of hip boots and walked into the flooded street. It would be the last time he'd be in the house. What he wore would be all that he owned.

A firefighter stood at the end of the street. He shook his head. The water was too deep for the trucks to get in. By the time they arrived, Vic Foresta's home was ablaze.

A neighbor came to help. They manned the hoses with the firefighters and, when it appeared hopeless, they pleaded with the firefighters to leave them a hose. They would keep fighting the blaze, until 2:30 in the morning, until there was nothing left to save.

Inside were the memories of life-times.

Sgt. John Macdonald came to work Tuesday morning and was sent to Kelly's Meadows at 10 o'clock to check on a man trapped in a car on North Shore road. The area seemed quiet enough and, despite a careful search, no one seemed trapped anywhere.

Macdonald turned when he heard

what sounded like a fast-flowing river on the street behind him. The water roared out of the Atlantic toward Macdonald and his partner.

For the next two hours the two men rode an amphibious duck, evacuating hundreds of people from Point of Pines, Kelly's Meadows and Oak Island.

When they arrived at one house, they were already level with the second floor. Sitting atop a bureau, stacked atop another bureau, was a woman and her two small children.

The water swirled eight feet deep as Macdonald and scuba divers pulled them to safety. A few miles away, in Nahant, 61-year-old Melvin Demit wasn't as lucky.

A thousand years ago, the town of Nahant was actually three small islands on the edge of the Atlantic. By Tuesday mid-morning, it looked that way again. Ice water flowed through the low-lying areas like a river and the fire department had separated into two parts — two trucks on one side of the river, two on the other at the station house.

At 10:30, the water was a few inches deep in basements, a few feet deep on roads. It was, some felt, like many other

storms when high tides and heavy winds battered the North Shore.

At 10:31, some now guess, the water was eight feet deep, roaring into basements, smashing through windows and doors.

A tidal wave, thought Jack Donahue, as he thought about his parents down the street on the lower end of Fox Hill road. They'd already called the fire department for help and there was nothing left to do but wait.

Jiggs Donahue and his wife were 71 years old. For much of the morning, he'd stood in waist-deep water in his basement, trying to wake his boarder, Mel Demit, in his basement apartment.

When the wave crashed through, Donahue climbed the stairs to safety. The basement filled to its ceiling with water.

When John Quinn Jr., Andy Puleo and Bob Lehman got the call for a man trapped in a building, they knew it would be impossible to steer the fire truck through the deep water. They set out on foot, walking the last two blocks to 14 Fox Hill rd., neck deep in water.

A huge front-end loader, with eight-foot tires, was already on the street, picking residents from their windows and porches with its bucket. Jiggs

Donahue and his wife climbed aboard. They hollered to the firemen about Mel Demit.

## It was too late. If Demit was still in there, he was already dead. They hollered and yelled. There wasn't an answer.

Across the street and three doors down, Dorothy Pass — her husband, Arthur, stranded in Arlington by the storm's force — watched the drama from a second-floor window. She saw the firemen leave, and three hours later, watched the blue flames arc from a wire onto the aluminum siding of the Donahue home. When the fire started, she called the fire department.

It took nearly three hours for fire-

fighters to drag hoses through the water. The Donahue home was already leveled and all that was left to do was save adjoining property. Three days later, scuba divers found Mel Demit's body in the ice and water still flooding his basement apartment. He never knew there was a fire.

Dorothy Pass was frightened. The front-end loader had left and the water seemed to creep higher and higher on her basement walls. It was time to leave.

She flagged down a big Boston Gas truck and pleaded with the workmen to get her to safety. As she climbed into the truck, someone shouted from next door. Eighty-seven-year-old Salvatore Albondy, an aging man who spent much of his life in Boston's West End before high-rise apartment buildings drove him out, was dying. Could he be taken to Lynn Hospital?

The gas company workers carried him through the water, pushed him into the truck cab next to Dottie. The receding tide had left the causeway passable.

The truck splashed through the street. Salvatore Albondy didn't last the storm.

# With a soft click, the radio in Jack Fargo's bedroom switched on at 5:30 a.m. Monday, the start of another work week.

Fargo had the radio tuned to WHDH because he likes its weather reports.

The meteorologists were on the air soon after Fargo awoke, promising a winter storm for late in the day. Fargo wasn't concerned. He has been commuting from his house in Brockton to GCA/Burlington Division for 17 years.

The trip is 42 miles each way. In very bad weather it occasionally took him four or five hours to get home, but he always made it safely.

Still, Monday was his 42d birthday, and there'd be cake and ice cream and a little celebration with his wife and children, so he decided he'd leave work early if the weather looked rough.

Fargo's daughter, Linda, 18, was up and around. Starting her second semester at Franklin Technical Institute in Boston, where she studies architecture, Linda would ride with her father to the Riverside MBTA station, then switch to the Green Line. Jack enjoyed having company for part of the commuting trip.

He had no way of knowing just how much time he was going to spend with Linda in the days to come.

Tea and toast, a glass of orange juice, and it was 6:30 a.m. The sun was trying to get up over the horizon and it was time to leave. Fargo kissed his wife, Marie, goodbye, and he and Linda walked out to his front-wheel drive Honda, still running well in its third winter of service.

The trip was routine, although there were ominous swirls of fine snow on Rte. 128 north of Rte. 9. Fargo, a design engineer who works with integrated circuitry at the Burlington plant, walked into his office at 7:40 a.m.

## Monday was a very quiet day in the convent with the shamrock shutters in Needham.

Sister Eileen O'Leary, a Franciscan nun assigned to St. Bartholomew's Parish on Great Plain avenue, spent the day reading and doing housework. She also watched some television for news of the winter storm approaching New England.

On most Mondays, Sister Eileen teaches classes in religious education to teenagers after school and in the evening. But classes had been canceled Feb. 6. "We don't know for sure how much snow was coming," said Sister Eileen, "but let's cancel the classes to be on the safe side."

It started snowing before noon, covering the parking lot at the church and school complex across the street from the convent. The winds were on the rise, and Sister Eileen sensed it could be a severe storm. Born in Somerville, assigned by the order for a number of years to Little Falls, Minn., and Syracuse, N. Y., before coming to St. Bartholomew's, she'd told people many times, "I'm no stranger to snow."

Within a few hours the snow would bring more than 2000 strangers to Sister Eileen's door, turning her peaceful suburban world into an Arctic missionary's existence for days.

The phone rang in Mrs. Marie Jennings' house in Canton. It was Pondville Hospital in Norfolk, where Mrs. Jennings was due for a regular cancer treatment at 4 p.m. Monday.

Could Mrs. Jennings come earlier? The hospital administrator wanted to know. The storm was going to arrive earlier than originally expected, and it made sense not to travel after dusk.

Mrs. Jennings checked with her friend and neighbor, Mrs. Claire Young, who was going to drive her to the hospital. Yes, she told the hospital, they'd be there a 2 p.m.

The mission of mercy was going to end in tragedy, but Mrs. Young, 50, and Mrs. Jennings, 59, set off for Pondville Hospital in good spirits, apprehensive, but thankful for the hospital's thoughtfulness.

Both women were later found dead of carbon monoxide fumes after their car became bogged down in the snow on the trip home.

Ronald Thompson pulled his truck into the far right northbound lane on Rte. 128 in Dedham. It was 11 a.m., snow had been falling for 40 minutes, and Thompson had some potholes to patch before it got too deep.

The winds swirled snow in his face as he got out of the Dept. of Public Works truck. Standing with his back to the traffic, he shoveled cold-patch material out of the back of the pickup into a pothole.

State Police Trooper Ronald M. Comeau of the Foxboro barracks was on duty a few miles away and noted the worsening travel conditions. "The wind was a bigger factor than the road," he said.

As Ron Thompson shoveled, a motorist rushing along in the left passing lane tried to pull over to the center of the highway.

Suddenly, he lost control of his vehicle.

The car spun 180 degrees, bounced off the guardrail behind Thompson, and smashed trunk-first into the rear of the truck. Thompson was crushed, fatally injured. After Trooper Comeau arrived on the scene, the DFW worker of eight months was rushed to Glover Hospital in Needham, then to Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Thompson, a bachelor, died on the operating table at 3 p.m.

Police brought charges against the motorist, but the storm had claimed its first victim along Rte. 128 and, tragically, it was a man who was working to improve driving conditions.

□

In Burlington, it was noon now, and Jack Fargo was beginning to get concerned. The snow was falling heavily already, winds made visibility out the office window difficult, and there was Linda to think about.

In previous years, Fargo would work late on snow days, traveling well behind storm systems. But the new arrangement with Linda made that inadvisable. There was that call from California due at 1 p.m. As soon as the call came through, Fargo decided, he'd call Linda and head for Riverside Station and then to Brockton and a birthday party. The call didn't come until 3 p.m. The guy apologized for being late, saying he'd been delayed at an executive lunch. "Hell, it's only noon out there now," said Fargo. "What kind of martini breaks do you guys take?"

Fargo called Franklin Institute. Linda came to the dean's office to take the call. "I don't care what class you're in, we're going home," she heard her father.

That was fine with Linda. Classes had been canceled as of three o'clock, and the Green Line was still running. She set off at once.



The Peter Stuyvesant, part of Pier Four restaurant on Boston's waterfront, lists during second day of the blizzard. It had been a Hudson River boat.

## The Peter Stuyvesant's last minutes

The scene was eerie, and the man was worried.

The parking lot was snow-laden. The winds howled. The seas slammed against the building on the wharf.

But inside Anthony's Pier 4, the main dining room was empty, quiet.

Upstairs, in his second-floor office-apartment, Anthony Athanas, one of those whose name means Boston, was alone.

He wasn't worried about his restaurant. He was worried about the Peter Stuyvesant, his floating palace. In the savage seas, the old Hudson River boat had moved about six inches in its elaborate cradle, and Athanas was worried because that had never happened before.

It was nearly midnight, Monday night.

For a decade, the Peter Stuyvesant had, after her retirement as a cruise ship in New York, served as the site of hundreds of political affairs, business dinners and other functions.

For Athanas, she was his special, prized possession.

Everywhere he traveled, he would pick up something special to add to the Stuyvesant's lavish appointments.

And he had gone to complex and costly lengths to make the vessel secure.

She rested on a specially-designed wooden grid. Attached to the front and rear were two big pieces of steel.

And into them ran two long pipes, each 70 feet long and 16 inches in diameter. The pipes, in turn, were anchored to the parking lot on the dock; they had been hammered into bedrock and encased in 40-ton concrete blocks.

But on Monday night, as the full fury of the hurricane force winds pounded at the ship, the iron and concrete mooring began to seem as fragile as Scotch tape.

Athanas called the Coast Guard and a Boston tow boat company. Could some craft be spared to come up next to the Peter Stuyvesant to help stabilize her? he asked.

The answer was no. All boats were only for use in life-or-death situations.

Athanas looked at his watch. It was a little after 1 a.m. He looked at his ship; she had moved some more, but there was nothing to be done.

Two hours later, Athanas smelled something funny, acrid. For the first time he worried about his safety. It didn't smell like a fire, but he decided to check downstairs anyway.

As he stood up, he felt like he was on a movie stage. The lights in his office suddenly burned super-bright as a power surge raced through the building.

Glancing out the window, he saw the power lines to the Peter Stuyvesant snap, shooting sparks that suddenly illuminated the adjacent parking lot.

Now Athanas was running down the stairs. As he reached the main dining room, the source of the smell was obvious.

The power surge had overtaxed the fluorescent lights and they had burned out. In the flickering, dim glow of the wall lights, Athanas looked around and saw a hair-raising sight: his electric cash registers were smoking.

That was when Athanas looked out the window again at the Peter Stuyvesant.

She was gone.

The Peter Stuyvesant had toppled out of her cradle into the sea. The sound of the final wrenching must have been deafening, but all Athanas heard was the northeast wind.

□

The ship is insured and possibly salvageable, but, to Athanas, irrepleachable.

"No matter how much they give me," he said later, "I don't know if it's salvageable. I can't restore it the same way. The shopping in London, throughout the East in antique shops, anywhere I was I'd always be looking for something for the boat. I can't do it the same way again."

The Peter Stuyvesant was a landmark for a decade, but it was the sea that left its mark on her.

# THE HIGHWAYS VANISHED — AND CARS DID TOO

**It took Fargo almost two hours to get to Riverside.**

The highways had been plowed, but the snow was falling faster than roads could be cleared. About three or four inches of packed snow covered Rte. 128, but the little front-wheel-drive car handled it well.

There was a woman with Linda who had no way to get to her house in Auburndale. She climbed into the car, and Fargo dropped her off.

By the time he and Linda got to the end of Commonwealth avenue in Newton, the commuter traffic was very heavy, and very, very slow. Fargo decided a variant on his late-hours-at-the-office gambit was in order, so he stopped at the Marriott Hotel for a sandwich and a drink.

By 8:30 p.m. it seemed there was no sense in waiting any longer for the traffic to thin. Jack and Linda Fargo swung out onto Rte. 128, expecting a slow trip home. Twenty minutes later, past the Highland avenue, Needham, exit, their car could go no further. Ahead were hundreds of stoplights — the red taillights of cars, visible as far as Fargo could see through the thick night air.

One hardy motorist had walked ahead until he found out what was wrong: two tractor-trailer trucks had jackknifed about a half-mile ahead, and the roadway was reduced to one lane. "I'll be a long wait, but we'll get through," he said, and walked back to tell the same thing to motorists behind Fargo.

The man was wrong. The trucks he saw weren't the only ones that had jackknifed. The massive traffic jam was eight miles long, from the intersection of Rtes. 128 and 138 in Canton, where two other giant rigs had failed to negotiate a turn.

The motorists listened carefully to their radios, gathering in the lee of a truck to compare notes. One report was that there were 150 cars or so stuck on Rte. 128. That was ridiculous, a man said to Fargo, you can see more cars than that right here.

"Let's all blow our horns at once, then they'll get the message," the man joked.

There wasn't much laughter. The winds were frightening, and the drift-

ing snow was beginning to pile up around the cars.

Further South, cancer patient Marie Jennings and her driver Claire Young were also immobilized by the snow. They had left the hospital at 4 p.m. and stopped briefly at a store in Norwood, where they were offered refuge. Hoping they could make it to Canton, they set off, taking short cuts, to avoid as much of the commuter rush as they could.

On Access road in Norwood, which runs from Neponset street to Rte. 1, the car skidded into a snowbank and was stuck fast. The two women knew they could never free the vehicle, so they decided to wait for rescue. They cracked the window, feeling sure they were safe from carbon monoxide fumes, and talked while the motor ran.

What they didn't realize was that the tail pipe of the car was clogged with snow.

Long before the snow buried the car, long before Norwood police officers checked the stalled vehicles in the area, the two women were dead from carbon monoxide poisoning.

All throughout eastern Massachusetts, people were getting stuck, and other people were offering help. Hundreds opened the doors of their homes, stores and factories to total strangers so they could call home, stay warm, get something to eat until the storm stopped and the roads were passable again. It was a long wait.

Not everyone sought refuge, or accepted shelter when it was offered. Cornelius Lynch, 62, of Hyde Park, was one person who stayed with his car, and apparently the decision cost him his life.

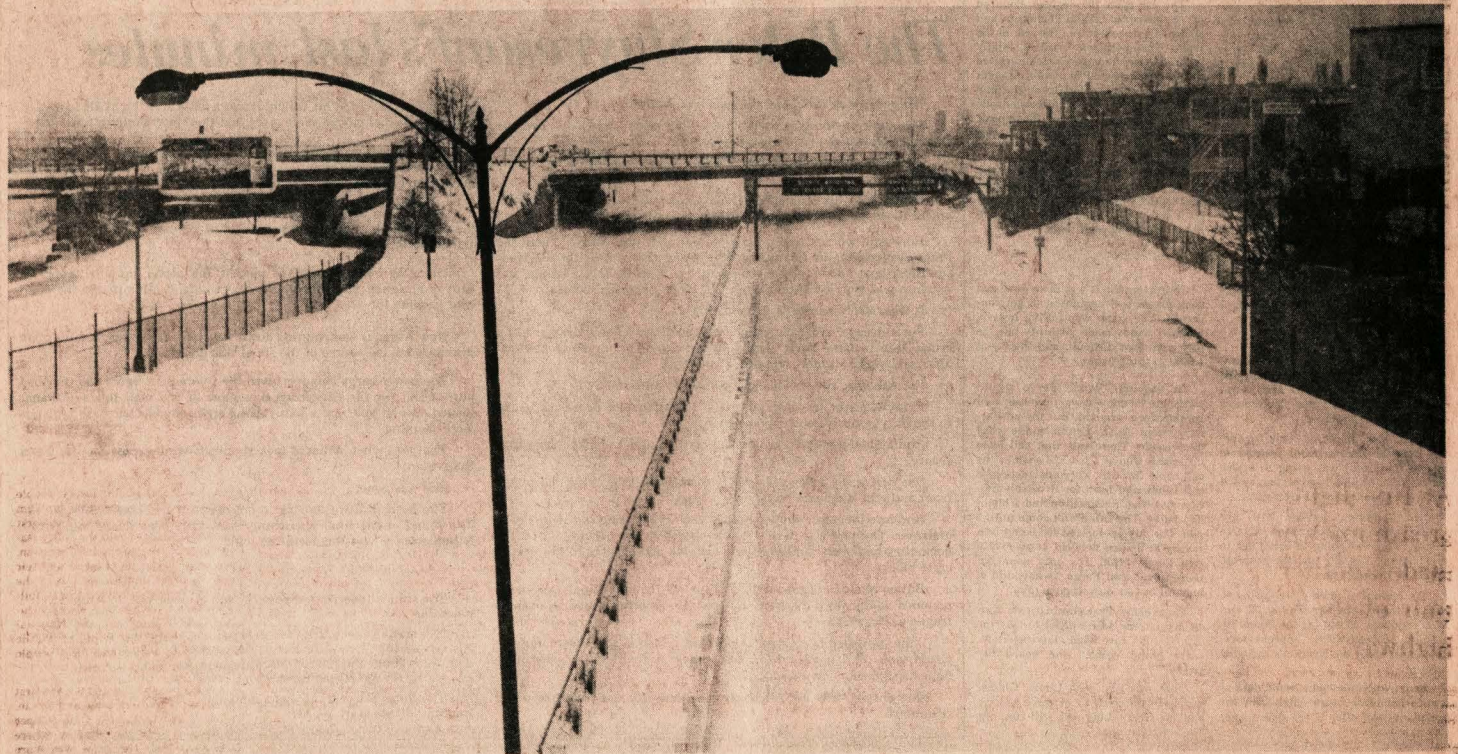
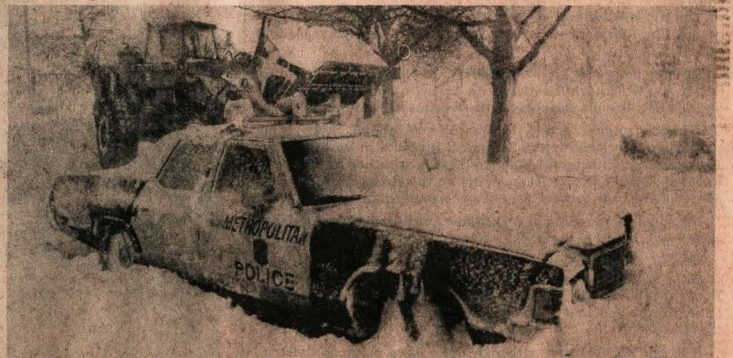
Lynch was a hard-working man. He had a full-time job during the day at Boston State Hospital, and then drove to Morse Shoe Co. in Canton for a shift as a security guard at night. Monday, he left work at the hospital early — about 9 p.m. — to be sure to be on time at the factory.

In the early evening, his car either broke down or became stuck in the snow on Rte. 8 in Canton. In that area, Rte. 138 is called Turnpike street, and it is a residential area. Many people, Eddie DeSantis and Jack Bryette to name but two, fought their way through the snow to the stranded, offering shelter, food, use of a telephone.

Lynch, for reasons no one will ever know, said he didn't want to leave his vehicle. Bryette made his last trek out to the cars about 2 a.m. "No thanks," Lynch said, "I'll be all right."



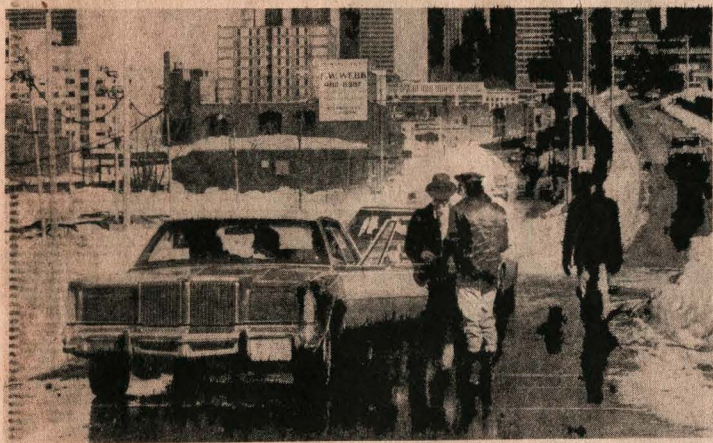
The fact that cars are maneuvered best on smooth, dry surfaces was never more evident than last week when they came to a halt everywhere. An MDC cruiser sits stuck at Koscusko Circle at Morrissey and Day boulevards (right). Other cruisers and tow trucks swarm around an accident (above) on Route 128 near Dedham. A light pole blown by the storm came to rest in a most unfortunate spot (below).







The hassles of a crowded Rte. 128 near Stoughton disappeared temporarily with the presence of serene snow drifts. Driving difficulties returned, however, as motorists hit the road again and were checked during the driving ban (left). Those who weren't allowed to drive helped those who were in Dorchester as locals pushed a National Guard truck.



### At first light, area homeowners made another tour of the highway.

Cornelius Lynch was found dead in a snowbank, where he had succumbed in an apparent effort to reach the Morse Shoe plant for shelter.

Two miles away, the Morse Shoe plant didn't really need a security guard for the lonely night shift. Some

400 stranded people had been invited into the plant by executive vice president Milton Shore. They ate a hot meal in the cafeteria, called home at company expense, bedded down on cardboard.

Mr. Lynch would have found shelter had he reached the plant, but the blizzard of '78 was proving its cruelty.

In Needham, a few miles away from the convent at St. Bartholomew's, 38-year-old Needham firefighter Bob Wade had climbed into his four-wheel-drive truck late that afternoon and headed for the station for the overnight shift.

After a few hours on the job, Wade knew he wasn't going to get much sleep, even if there were no fires. Needham police needed people to volunteer four-wheel-drive vehicles, and Wade thought his four-door Cheyenne was as dependable a rig as money can buy.

He told the police they could use his truck, and if they needed a good driver

to extricate people from bad situations, he could drive the thing himself.

Just a few miles away, Rte. 128 was what truckers call a parking lot. Jack Fargo's car was by then one of 3000 buried in the snow. The jackknifed tractor-trailers were among 500 trucks immobilized by the blizzard.

The wind was blowing steadily between 40 and 50 miles an hour, with gusts twice as fierce. Visibility was zero.

The stranded motorists sat inside their beached vehicles and waited —

and waited some more as the night and the storm enveloped them.

When Jack and Linda Fargo realized they were in for a long haul, they began sleeping in shifts. Jack would sleep for 45 minutes while Linda stayed awake. Then he'd get out of the car, make sure the tail pipe was clear of snow, and check with motorists around his car to make sure they were all right.

Finally, he started the car, and ran it for 15 minutes while listening to the radio. Periodically, a few men would gather in the lee of the tractor-trailer nearby and discuss their predicament. A consensus was easily reached: it was probably suicidal to try to fight the drifts. They would wait for rescue.

In Needham, public safety people were worried. The scope of the problem didn't become clear until the first snowmobiler roared into the police station after a reconnaissance mission. Then other residents cranked up their snow machines and headed out to the highway. They checked car by car, telling the motorists that Gov. Michael Dukakis was calling out the National Guard to help the Dept. of Public Works, State Police and local people rescue the stranded motorists.

For Fargo and his daughter, the first contact with rescuers came at 3:30 a.m. Tuesday. The boots of a state trooper appeared outside the window where Jack Fargo sat. The snow was more than two feet deep. The trooper said the



# IT WAS TIME TO CLEAR OFF — AND TRY TO DIG OUT



northbound lane had been cleared and that they should get out of the car and fight their way to the other roadway through the wind and snow. A truck or a bus would be along soon to take them to shelter.

Twenty or 30 people huddled together for warmth on the side of the road, one of the first groups scheduled to find haven at St. Bartholomew's Church. Sister Eileen was asleep. She had watched the 11 p.m. news, concerned about the storm, but assumed that most people had made it home safely. She was snug. She watched some of the late show and then climbed into bed.

Bob Wade was awake — and behind the wheel of his rugged truck. The police had asked him to get to Bud Roche's house, take Bud to the supermarket he owns, and transport some food over to St. Bartholomew's. There

were going to be quite a few people at the church and they'd be hungry, the police said.

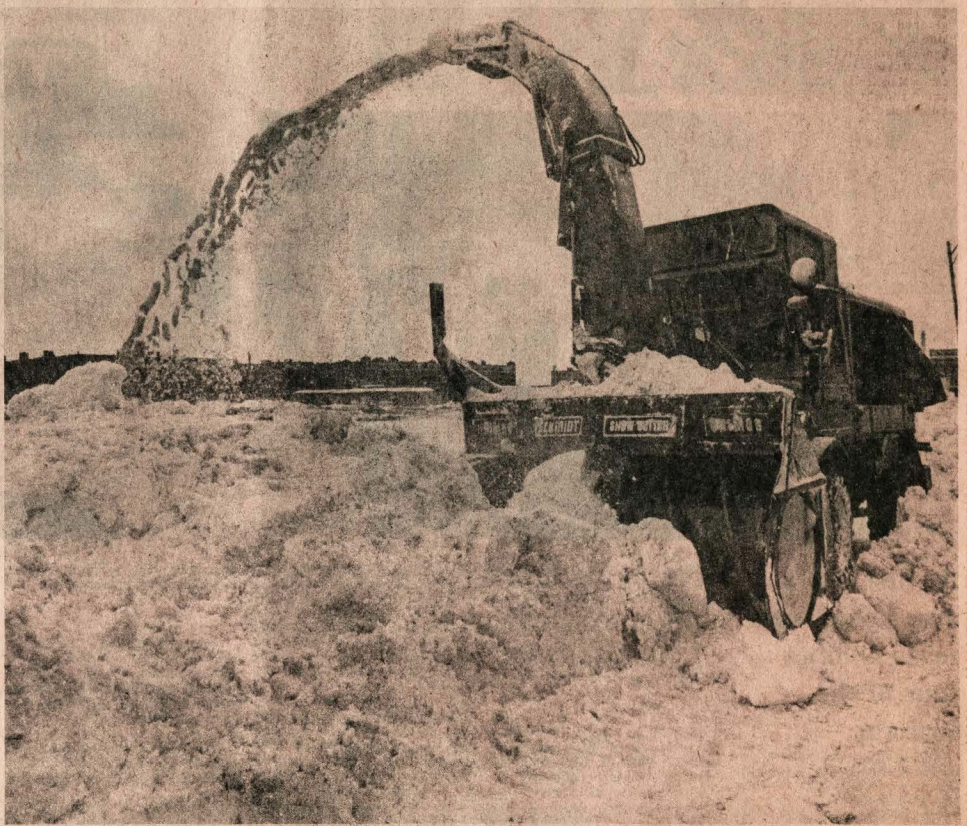
Wade understood what the storm had done as soon as he left the fire station. By the time he got to Roche's street, he was scared for the people on the highway. The snow was higher than his hood, and a snowplow had been unable to get through to Roche's house.

Wade took a deep breath and decided to see what his Cheyenne was made of. He slammed the rig into low-range and rammed it through the snow, around the plow and up to Roche's house.

It was shortly before dawn Tuesday morning. Needham, a friendly bedroom community of 30,000, was about to become temporary home for several thousand more — several thousand anxious, frightened, cold and hungry people.



As the storm clouds drift on toward the horizon (above) as seen from East Boston, motorists discovered what had been left behind. One man opens the trunk of his car on Morrissey boulevard while a National Guardsman checks a car in Hampton for possible victims.





Things began to look up as Army equipment cleared southbound lane of Rte. 128 in Needham (above). But things were looking down for car on Massachusetts avenue snowbank near Edison plant.



# A MERCILESS SEA SLAMMED INTO THE SOUTH SHORE

Working in Stoughton last Monday, Agnes Sheehan did not worry about the approaching storm until just before 4 o'clock.

True, she shared a home with her sister, Mary, in Humarock, a beach settlement in Scituate isolated by the Atlantic Ocean and the South River.

But she had an alternative to going home that night. If the storm got too severe, she would do what she often did on such occasions—drive her pickup truck to her parents' home a few miles away from her work.

It was Stanton Fisher, a colleague at the Goddard Memorial Hospital, that first gave her a sense of apprehension. He told her he was concerned about his own home on the Marshfield side of the South River.

"I have a funny feeling we are going to be flooded. And if the storm gets bad and Mary has to get out, you will be the only one who can get her out with your four-wheel drive.

Agnes decided to head for Humarock when she got through work.

Even after the snow started that day, her sister, Mary, 27, was not worried either, at first. Her boyfriend, Richard Cugini, who lives with the sisters, had gone plowing.

The couple who live downstairs in the two-story seaside home, Susan O'Brien and Steve Martin, who are in their early 20s, had gone upstairs to play Scrabble with Mary while the storm passed by.

They all had lived through storms in Humarock before, and nothing more disconcerting had happened than a little water in some cellars, some shingles blown off a roof. Sure, this storm looked like a big one. But part of the fun of living by the sea is watching its wrath in a storm. And this one did not appear big enough to get upset about it.

Little did they, or others along the coast, know the destructive might of the storm that was building even then at sea. Nor how it would affect their lives.

Eight miles north of Humarock, Peter Marshall, 29, and his wife, Barbara, 28, watched television,

keeping one ear attuned to radio weather reports in their two-story home built three years ago in a beach area known both as Cedar Point and Lighthouse Point.

They felt secure because they had sunk steel-reinforced concrete supports under their land before they built, and their home was higher off the beach than most other homes on their street. But the Marshalls, two dogs were unusually nervous.

And the weather forecasts were becoming rather alarming. Bruce Schwieger on WBZ-radio was by now predicting "a storm of historic proportions." Many firms had let their employees out early, and highways were crowded.

By 4 p.m. a trailer truck had skidded across the southbound lane of Rte. 3 in Braintree. Visibility was extremely low because of thick snow driven by hurricane-force winds and traffic moved at 5 mph.

It took Agnes Sheehan two hours—

twice as long as usual—to get to Humarock. When she arrived, she found Mary, Susan and Steve calm. The wind was increasing however, and the surf beat against their picture window on the second floor.

It was 7:30 that night when the waves first began leaping the seawall behind the house, flinging sand and then pebbles against it. That was when the occupants of the house first became scared. They became more so within minutes.

By then, water had begun seeping into the first-floor apartment, and was filling the street outside. Elsewhere on the spit, residents had already begun evacuating their houses and slogging through the water to higher ground.

About 8:30, the banging of stones against the house was replaced by the crashing of larger rocks against it. That was when Agnes made her decision. "Mary, we're leaving," she said, and the four headed out of the house.

In Green Harbor and Brant Rock in Marshfield, at Scituate beaches of Peggotty and Egypt and Minot, in the town of Hull at the approaches to Boston Harbor, people grew increasingly worried as the storm continued. The tide was coming in fast and powerfully. Seawalls all along the shore were being tested, and at picturesque Peggotty Beach, tucked into a cove near Scituate Harbor, sand as well as snow cascaded on the houses and piled up in the streets.

At Minot Beach at the northerly tip of the town, entire waves—not merely their spray—catapulted over a big

seawall that had protected the village of cozy cottages since 1931.

"It looked like Niagara Falls," Mrs. Patsy Reilly, who lived in a two-story home across the street, recalled later.

At 8:30 p.m., the lights in Minot went out, and Mrs. Reilly took her six children to safety in another home down the street.

In Hull, water was collecting rapidly, not only in the low parts of the town, but—and more ominously—in sections such as Kenberma, which usually had escaped floods.

In times like this along a seashore, attention turns to the tides. Because of the phase of the moon, one of the biggest tides of the year was due that night, and the storm was sure to make it even bigger than it normally would have been. By 9 p.m., the storm was belting the shore with an intensity

greater than many of its residents had ever seen, and high tide still was 90 minutes away.

Agnes and Mary Sheehan, Susan O'Brien and Steve Martin stepped from their home into water up to their knees. Power lines were blowing down, and electrical power was out, as it was by now along almost the entire length of the shoreline from Hull to Green Harbor. The stench from overflowed sewers filled the Humarock air.

"We got into the truck, me, Mary, Sue and Steve, and their dog, Anika," Agnes recalled later. "The truck started, and we began to leave, and we were driving over telephone poles and boards. There was debris everywhere.

The water was up to the doors of the truck, and waves crashed against its sides. Pummeled by the breakers racing over the seawall, the truck began to tip,

and the four jumped out, one by one, into freezing water.

People in a house a few hundred feet away had seen their plight and were waving a flashlight as a signal to come towards them. Sea water raced down the street in a torrent, knocking Mary off her feet and causing Agnes to scream, "It's over my head." The others tried to persuade her she could make it to the house. Steve held the dog until a wave broke against him, and the dog disappeared in the water.

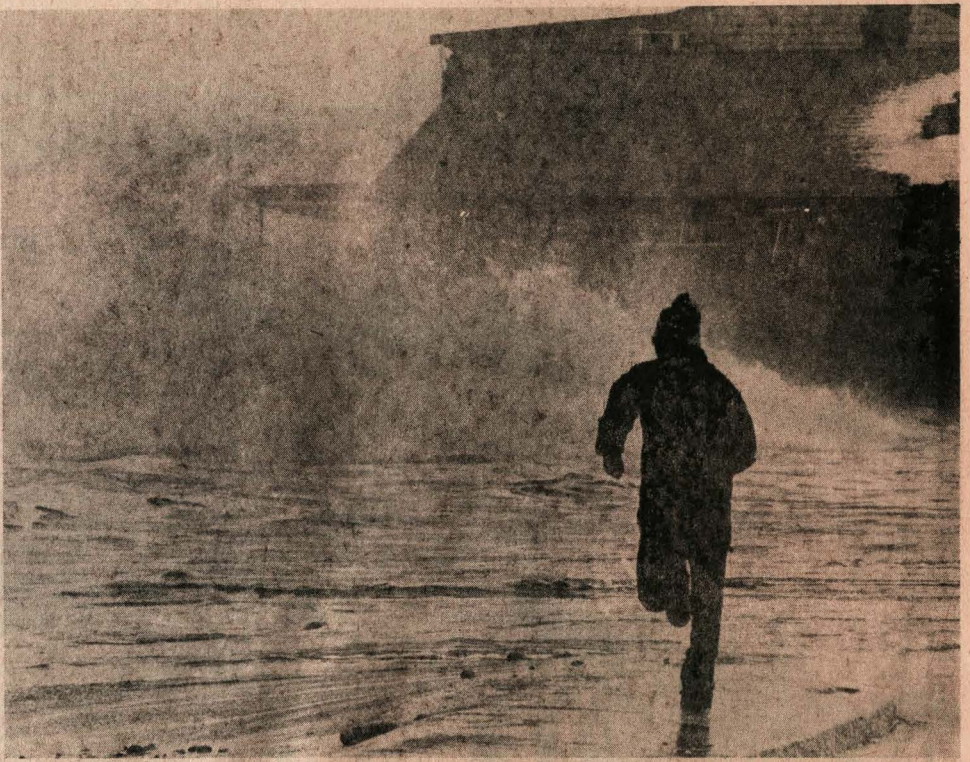
It took only minutes, but it seemed like hours before they finally made it to the temporary safety of the house.

About this time, from their home on the southeast corner of Minot Beach, Jim Constantine and his family looked up the beach toward the neighboring

cottages and saw Patsy Reilly's home engulfed by fire.

Mrs. Reilly and her six children watched from a neighbor's home. There was nothing she could do about it. There was nothing firemen could do about it, either. They stood by and watched helplessly several hundred yards away, prevented from getting to the blaze by the water cascading over the seawall.

By then, however, the Scituate police and fire departments were fully mobilized, and National Guard trucks were pulling into the town. Cedar Point is one of the lowest areas of the town and on some streets firemen were wading through waist deep water, pulling a boat along behind them to rescue stranded residents.



With a summer cottage and the spray of the surf in the background, one young man runs along the Plymouth Beach area (above). Kate Figuerda holds her son, Casey, 2, and watches the water rise around her home at 141 Warren av. in Plymouth.



**Despite the terror experienced by some people, the damage along the South Shore coastline up to then was not severe.**

"At that time it was mostly inconvenience, like flooded cellars and sand and rocks in the streets," recalls Peter Marshall of Humarock. The same was true in other beach areas, although along the coast, everywhere, the roaring water was a more fearsome adversary than the blowing snow that was causing the concern in inland communities.

Some ventured out later that night after high tide. They came back with reports of encouragement. With the tide flowing out, the people along the waterfront began to breathe more easily—but not for long.

Another high tide was due about 10:30 Tuesday morning and even in normal times it would have been a foot and a half bigger than Monday night's high tide.

The momentum that the storm had been building up at sea for nearly 24 hours had generated a mighty force. It was impossible to tell from the shore how mighty it had grown, but as dawn began to brighten the sky next morning, one thing was clear: The storm was preparing to deliver a one-two punch—and the second could be worse than the first.

Agnes Sheehan and the others had made their way to the home of Edward O'Donnell, a decorated Vietnam veteran whose home was on higher ground. Now a bark from outside brought welcome news. Anika was back, unharmed.

During the night, the Marshalls kept an eye on the clock, thinking about the approaching tide. About 4 a.m. a neighbor, David Ball, went to the seawall to see how the ocean appeared at low tide.

"As soon as the tide turned," Ball said later, "it came flying in at an incredible rate." He hurried home and took his wife and their two children to a safer home.

There were ominous signs up and down the coast as the tide roared in. In Minot, Jim Constantine noticed more debris in the street than he had ever seen before during a storm, and the water in some streets was four feet deep.

By 10 a.m. O'Donnell's home became surrounded by water, and the people inside were scared.

"Tuesday morning was the worst," remembers Agnes Sheehan. "As high tide came in, houses across the street just smashed apart. They just ripped

apart and floated away. Cars were floating by our window. The water came in the front door, and we all went to a back room. That was our last resort."

In the garage, tools crashed into the water, and Agnes thought she could hear the O'Donnell's car "floating around." They prayed.

Down the street, Donald Hourihan watched houses collapse. First one would go, then five or 10 minutes later, another.

The tide was so high that the breakers, some 20 to 40 feet high, roared over seawalls and struck their full force against the oceanfront settlements. Houses were bowled over as though they had been built at the mean low water mark.

On Peggotty Beach, Jo Ann Gilbert's six-room split level was carried across the street into another home. Philip Cornell's home tipped over onto the home next to it. Thirteen of the 14 homes which had occupied prized sites on sand dunes at the beach's edge were demolished, and the other was badly damaged.

Dr. Owen Mullaney's home was swept from its foundation, and a week later still no trace of it had been found. In Minot, all evidence of the fire which destroyed the Reilly home was washed away.

At Minot Beach, the seawall collapsed, knocking the foundations from under James Constantine's home and apartment, causing them to crash in ruins.

Thousands of persons made it to safety along the coast, many of them

with the help of police, firemen and the National Guard. Some tried to get out of the area, but did not succeed.

Firemen from Norwell helped Scituate firemen get people out of houses into boats on Cedar Point, rescuing scores this way.

In response to one call for help, a team in an aluminum boat commanded by fire Capt. Herbert Fulton, 41, of Norwell, made it through deep water, stiff wind and strong current to a home on Jericho road. The crew assisted Mrs. Frances Lanzikos, her daughter Amy, 5, and Edward and Alice Hart into the boat, shouting directions to them so they could be heard above the screaming wind.

With Brian McGowan, a Scituate call fireman, paddling, and Capt. Fulton steering the boat away from obstacles with a pole, they headed toward higher ground.

That was when the seawall broke. Water came cascading through the opening and smashed against the boat, wrenching it out of control. The little boat was spinning around like a cork when a giant wave overturned it, tossing its occupants into the water.

The others tried desperately to stand in the water and rescue the child, but the rushing water prevented them from staying on their feet.

Capt. Fulton grabbed Amy twice, only to be swept off his feet each time and lose his hold on her.

He saved Alice Hart. Scituate firemen rescued Mrs. Lanzikos and fire-fighter McGowan.

Amy and Edward Hart drowned.



In hard-hit Hull, two men travel a street of ice, snow and water by boat (left). Residents move out (above) and the National Guard digs out.

## Blizzard '78 — vital statistics

They are calling it the worst blizzard of this century.

A governor-declared state of emergency.

Here's why:

Snow Depth. A record 27.1 inches.

A President-declared state of emergency.

Duration. 32 hours and 40 minutes.

A President-declared disaster area in eight Bay State coastal counties.

24-hour Snowfall. A record 23.6 inches.

5000 Massachusetts National Guardsmen mobilized.

Wind Velocity. Peak gusts of 69 miles an hour in Boston, and 92 miles an hour at the Chatham weather station.

Tides. More than 16 feet above normal levels. Tides, several feet.

350 federal troops with heavy equipment airlifted to the Bay State.

Evacuees. More than 10,000 people living on the coast.

Landmarks Lost. The wharf building called Motif #1 in Rockport, the Peter Stuyvesant next to Anthony's Pier 4 in Boston, Outermost House near Nauset Beach in Eastham, and the amusement pier at Old Orchard Beach, Maine.

Deaths. 54 in New England, including 29 in Massachusetts.

Arrests. Roughly 160 in Boston for looting.

Vehicles Stranded. Some 3000 cars and 500 trucks just on an eight-mile stretch of Rte. 128.

Cost. An exact figure will never be known, but the damage approaches \$1 billion.

# ICE, SNOW AND WATER PLAGUED EVERYONE

The terror of the storm prevailed well into Tuesday night for much of southern New England.

If its tenor changed as day turned to night, with easing winds and an end to the snow, its danger remained.

For the coast, there was the threat of the third high tide since the blizzard began. It would again hurl rocks and sand and water, smashing windows and then walls with its force.

Along miles of Massachusetts coastline Tuesday, hundreds of people were suddenly destitute, the raging waters robbing them even of their cars, their means of escaping the piles of rubble that once were their homes.

And along the miles of highways Tuesday, thousands of people were also immobilized, stranded in their cars under mounds of snow, stranded far from their homes, in their cars but unable to use them to get back.

The problem was brutally simple. The state's roadway system had virtually shut down.

Motorists on the clogged highways couldn't get out. Fire trucks responding to alarms couldn't get through the unplowed streets to fires burning out of control. Ambulances couldn't reach the ill and the elderly. And on Rte. 128, until every vehicle was checked, no one knew how many commuters might be sick, dead or dying in their cars.

It would be days before even a semblance of order returned to the transportation system. And it will be months, even years, before recovery is completed for those whose homes and property had been laid to waste by the savagery of this winder storm.

At some point Tuesday, the people of Massachusetts knew that one problem was over — and another was just beginning.

The struggle back had started.

Along Rte. 128 and its feeder roads, the first people rescued were arriving at shelters before dawn.

Their new homes were motels, factories, houses, golf clubs, Red Cross centers, town halls, restaurants, armories, stores, police stations — and in Needham, the convent, church and school of St. Bartholomew's Parish.

Sister Eileen O'Leary woke up at 4 a.m. The convent was filling up with people, anxious to call home to tell their people they were alive. They were very tense, hyper, she thought. Many were shivering, even though it was warm in the suddenly crowded convent. They shivered for hours from the shock of the ordeal on the highway.

Needham firefighter Bob Wade arrived at the parish complex at 7 a.m. with a truckload of sandwich makings and an air of command. Like so many New Englanders, supermarket owner Bud Roche had come through. He told Wade, "Take what you need, those people are scared and cold and pretty soon they're going to be starved."

Two professional cooks volunteered to work, and Wade put them in charge of the kitchen. A few miles away at a photographic processing plant, 57 people were going to cook frozen pot pies in print drivers before the day was out. But St. Bartholomew's had a cafeteria.

Wade surveyed the situation of which he suddenly was in charge. Medical problems had to be a top priority. He counted heart patients, cancer patients and pregnant women among his refugees. He wrote down what each

needed, plowed his four-wheel drive truck through the snowy streets, got the medicine from the local hospital and arranged for the transfer of the people who most needed comfort to a seminary on Rte. 135.

The parishioners of St. Bartholomew's by this time were pitching in, hauling food, pillows, blankets — even magazines — to their church on sleds and toboggans, in backpacks on skis and snowshoes.

People helped people in need. All day. All night. Everywhere. Wade came up with what rescued engineer Jack Fargo called "the miracle of the tuna fish" — hundreds of cans of it, which volunteer cooks turned into a nourishing casserole for 1500 people by 4 p.m.

As the stranded motorists in Needham took their first spoonfuls of the warm casserole, Gerry Villani was nibbling on a bag of pretzels, the only food left in the pumping station on Revere's Broadstreet avenue.

When they pulled him to safety a few hours earlier, his skin was a bright, lobster red, his hands and feet were numb. The three hours of standing atop his truck, waves lapping at his feet, had taken its toll.

Jack Whitnell, a 66-year-old MDC tunnel inspector who'd thought about retiring in a few months, pulled the wet clothes from Villani and hung them in a back room to dry. He took off his own sweater and wrapped the driver's feet in it.

And then, Jack Whitnell did something no one expected. He pulled off his remaining shirt and hugged the short, stocky Villani, wrapping his arms around him. Whitnell hoped that his own body warmth would provide the gradual heat that Villani needed.

A few hours later, the men would be carried to safety at a Revere Beach restaurant where warm food and strong drink was waiting free of charge. They would begin the task of resuming their lives.

Up and down the coastline, there



In Hough's Neck (top), Nancy Erickson rests in a room full of snow as her mother enters. Atore Marengi, 91, rests at the Atherton Howe School in Quincy.

were clues that things were improving. The familiar white disaster trucks with red crosses on the doors could be seen shuttling back and forth through whatever streets were still passable. The olive jeeps of the Massachusetts National Guard drove quickly now through the snowdrifts.

And still the people streamed in to shelters. There were 1260 refugees counted at breakfast Wednesday morning at St. Bartholomew's.

The bright, clear sun bode well for the day ahead. Inside the Setuate High School gymnasium, the 600 temporary residents seemed to sprawl into every corner of the room, some sleeping, some worrying, a few talking quietly to each

other. Babies cried, dogs barked and the great search began.

The sun brought a new sense of purpose to February's victims. Throughout the state, they began looking for someone or something — a husband, a wife, a place to stay, a supermarket that was open, a ride back home to see what was left, an electrician, a repairman, a priest, a doctor, a word of encouragement wherever it was offered.

Frank Paradiso climbed down from the attic in his house on Revere's Broadstreet avenue and looked at the high-water marks four feet up on his

first-floor walls. Without heat and electricity and with his wife and three children, he'd weathered the storm in the waterfront home. He'd be damned if he was going to leave now.

Gerry Villani was back behind the wheel of another snowplow. He'd be damned if nearly dying was going to make him miss a day of work.

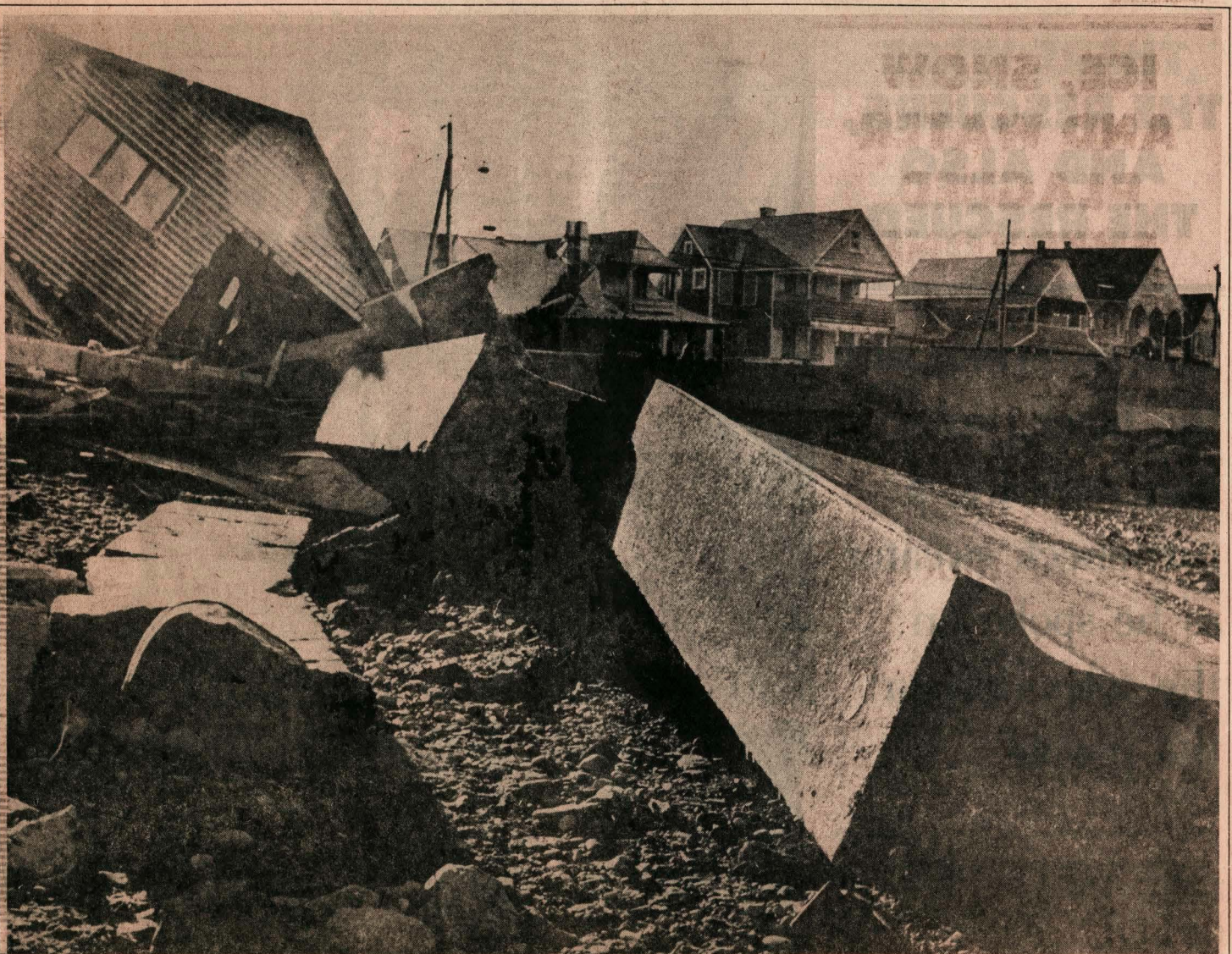
Andy Burdick, assured that Madelyn was safe, was walking back to his house. He'd be damned if the family's next home was going to be anywhere near the ocean.

During the night, the small, cedar-shingled house had toppled off its cinder block and piling foundation, finally

settling some eight feet from where it had once been. The back of the house was missing, hidden somewhere in the rubble at the end of the street 100 yards away. A broken main spewed water into the street. "This house is going right to the junkyard," he said.

At Boston's Logan Airport, specially-trained US Army snowfighters arrived with massive bulldozers and front-end loaders in C130s and C5As from Ft. Bragg, N.C. They headed for Rte. 128 to tackle millions of tons of snow.

The soldiers tore out guard rails on the median strip, had the steel cut off at ground level with torches and hauled cars from the clogged southbound side.



In Scituate, what is left of seawall built in 1931 lies with what is left of nearby homes. At left, Scituate Light, which survived the storm. At right, Susan O'Brien, Stephen Martin, Agnes Sheehan, Richard Cargini and Mary Sheehan (left to right) fill the void of a house in the Humarock section.



## Will Scituate ever be the same?

Scituate is an old and scenic seashore town, an easy ride from Boston.

Its 20 miles of coastline, with inlets and harbors, its long stretches of sandy beaches and its four cliffs from which ships far at sea can be seen on a clear day, have been luring people since the horse-and-buggy days.

Streetcars, then trains, then expressways have made the town increasingly accessible, especially from Greater Boston.

In the years since World War II, the town grew earlier and faster than many suburban towns in this state. But the town assimilated growth and changes while preserving its greatest asset — the attractiveness of its beaches.

It was precisely this asset that bore the brunt of the great storm's devastation.

More than 200 homes were wrecked and hundreds of others severely damaged.

Miles of road were ruined by washaways. Other roads were covered with sand or stones, in some places four feet deep.

Sand dunes were obliterated, and more erosion resulted along

the beaches than would be caused, one environmentalist estimates, by 50 years of tides.

At Humarock and other beaches, the sand was washed away, leaving only rocks and pebbles. In some places outgoing tides deposited the sands as spits near the shore, presenting potential new hazards for boats, and changes in marine life.

Big and costly seawalls, once thought to be the waterfront's protector, were cracked and toppled by the sea.

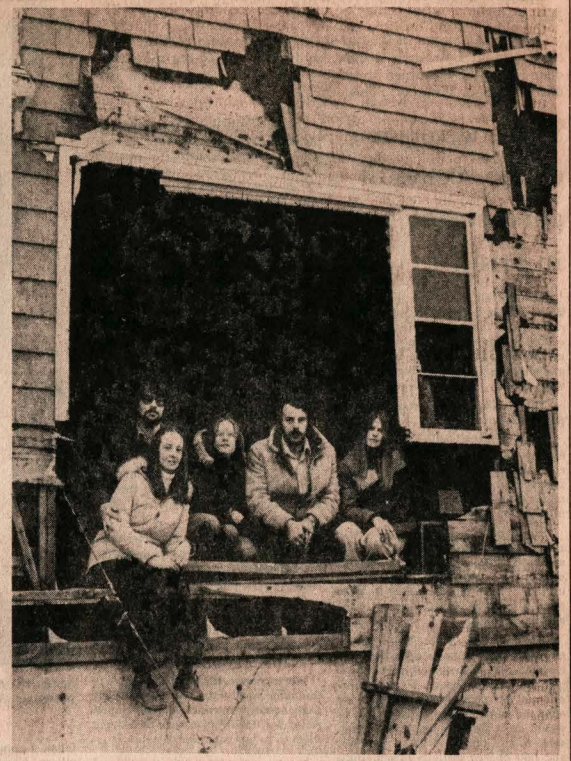
In the weeks to come, those cracks will serve as a stark reminder of what happened here in the second week of February and a warning of what the future can hold.

They raise new doubts and complex questions about whether Scituate can ever become the sandy lure she was just weeks ago.

Will the homes — which once stood just feet away from the ocean's edge — be rebuilt? Should they be? Or is it time for a realistic re-evaluation of the dangers, born out of a new respect for the sea and the room that she needs?

And even without the homes, what of the land, the beaches and the shoreline that millions of New Englanders loved and shared? Will it ever be restored to its former beauty?

They are questions that only Scituate and nature can answer.



of the highway to the cleared north-bound side.

More people got home, some walking many miles. At St. Bartholomew's, Sister Eileen helped parishioners Paul and Dorothy Brooks draw up lists of people still to be transported. The National Guard trucks continued to rumble out of the complex around the clock. Travel by private vehicle was still prohibited.

Wednesday and Thursday saw beautiful dawns breaking over a region still paralyzed. Nature had handed New England its worst winter beating in a century, then turned around and bathed its handiwork in bitter irony. The problems remaining were catastrophic in

the whole, staggering when considered one by one.

But for some, the end was finally in sight. On Friday, the last of the refugees, 60 trucks, left St. Bartholomew's. They had spent the week volunteering for every job imaginable, from filling in for town plow operators to helping to wash dishes to shoveling out townspeople.

Sister Eileen made them all "big, big sandwiches — truck driver sandwiches."

And because some of them were getting a bit "crummy" after so many days at the church complex, Sister Eileen arranged for them to take showers and

then went over to the convent to get the hair dryer for them to use.

Saturday, the last of the vehicles on Rte. 128 was pulled free of the snow.

By Sunday, Jack Fargo and the thousands of other hostages of winter were home with their families. St. Bartholomew's was back to its regular routine — although it isn't every Sunday that Cardinal Medeiros sends a personal note of thanks to a congregation.

And Bob Wade was putting his snowmobile in tip-top shape — not for a trip to New Hampshire, but "just in case there's more snow before this is cleaned up, because people's lives might depend on snow machines."

For others, with more to worry about than snowmobiles, it was a week-end filled with little jobs, of shoveling snow and ice from the basement, tearing out the water-soaked wall-to-wall carpeting. Work to do while waiting for Tuesday.

For the thousands of families in eastern Massachusetts who felt the brunt of the Blizzard of 1978, Tuesday would be the judgment day. Federal representatives would arrive at 13 relief centers around the state. They would know who was eligible for what and why.

By early morning, Revere's victims had lined up by the hundreds outside the door at St. Anthony's Church in

Revere. They talked of low-interest loans, tax breaks and money for food and clothing. Money from Washington to help the little people of Revere.

Money for everything from eyeglasses to motel rooms. From shoes to food. From dentures to tranquilizers.

For some, it wasn't enough.

Dr. Barbara Burns, a psychologist at Boston's Lindemann Health Center, walked among Revere's disaster victims. She listened to them talk, comforted them when they cried, tried to help them deal with an unprecedented ordeal.

What had happened, she explained, could change their lives. There would be marital rifts, when a partner feared

moving back near the sea. There would be indecision about what to do. There would be feelings that they, and they alone, were jinxed. There would be problems getting along in cramped hotel rooms. There would be fears of selling their house to someone else, afraid that the purchaser might someday drown. Would it be their fault?

"We try to get them focusing on reality," explained Dr. Burns. "To look at what they got out with. Their lives.

"We tell them to do something that will make them comfortable. And we tell them to do it now while they can come to terms with it.

"This storm will be a part of their lives forever."

# THERE WERE THE RESCUERS, AND ALSO THE RESCUED

The governor with the black, wavy hair, wearing a turtleneck sweater as he spoke on the television to the people . . .



Senior citizen in Revere who was driven out of her home is assisted by Army personnel to temporary shelter at Revere High School. Below, others are evacuated from "Ocean View Towers" at 45 Dolphin av. by the Revere fire department and the National Guard.

The tanned mayor of Boston, stuck on vacation in Palm Beach .

Comr. Joe Jordan of the Boston Police Dept., trying to catnap on the floor in the operations room at headquarters and nearly getting trampled by a lieutenant . . .

Presidential aides Stuart Eizenstat and Jack Watson ducking in and out of the Oval Office, telling Jimmy Carter what Mother Nature was doing to Massachusetts . . .

Joe D. Winkle from the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration, closing up his work after a flood in Asheville, N.C., to head for Boston to coordinate the response to the 79th disaster of his career . . .

House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. lobbying presidential aide Jody Powell . . .

The acting mayor of Boston in the mayor's absence, City Council President Lawrence DiCara, holding onto parking meters for dear life as he stumbled through the wind and snow in the pre-dawn hours of Tuesday, February 7 . . .

## These were some of the scenes of government in crisis.

At all levels, from town halls to the White House, the handling of the natural disaster that struck Massachusetts of Feb. 6 was spiced by petty politics, posturing, spurious claims of influence and elbowing for the limelight. It is always thus.

That is because the stakes for the people are so high.

When disaster strikes, it is to government that people are forced by circumstance to turn: For information, for instructions, for the cleanup, and above all for the aid that is the principal stimulus for the rebuilding process.

Throughout a wild week, the citizens of Massachusetts caught some revealing glimpses of three men in particular, as they observed them through the uniquely sharp lens of personal privations: Michael Dukakis, Jimmy Carter, and Kevin White.

The governor from Brookline — pained for so long as a cold, aloof, uncaring figure — would forge the first genuine, personal bond between himself and his constituents since taking over the corner office in 1975. And he would do it through that most impersonal of mediums, television. He would also take charge, initially in something of a vacuum.

The President from rural Georgia would again show himself to be a special friend of the Yankee state that gave him his largest majority in the 1976 election, and whose best-known congressman, Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., is Carter's closest legislative ally.

But the President would also show there are limits to his largesse.

The mayor from Boston would, in the main, defer to others. Fading in private over the political misfortune of his vacation timing, he was savvy enough to know that the problem was larger than his city. He resolved not to be an obstacle to the efforts made beyond its boundaries to deal with it.

To subordinates, White delegated the task of keeping the nose of city government to the grindstone of essential services: Public safety, clearing streets and getting life's necessities to the isolated, the old and the poor.

But even beyond that, government ceased for a while to be a dirty word. Leaving aside those with official titles, this was, above all, the case at the level where services actually get delivered: The MDC cop, the National Guardsman, the public works employee. These and others like them were the ones who made the system work.

Monday, Feb. 6.

On Beacon Hill, Michael Dukakis sat with his closest staff members. The heavy snow was already falling and he had sent state workers home early. There was only one real question they were discussing: Whether to run the government the next day with a skeleton crew.

In Washington, Jimmy Carter spent his most important moments that afternoon huddled for the fourth day with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

In Palm Beach, Kevin White was with his wife. The weather, he said later, was "awful, just lousy there, too. Katherine and I froze. I had no vacation, didn't even swim in the pool . . ."

For a change, the politicians were in the same boat with the people. They were equally unaware of, and unprepared for, the tests nature would put them to in just a matter of hours.

Gov. Michael Dukakis began to take command of a shaken state between 8 and 10 p.m. that Monday night in the improbable setting of David Brudnoy's talk show at the WHDH studio on Stuart street — a monthly stop for the man who was doing "town meeting" long before anyone heard of Jimmy Carter.

In between questions, he took calls from his chief secretary, David Liederman, who relayed to him two important requests. One came from Comr. John Sneedeker of the Metropolitan District Commission, asking that he urge residents of the low-lying sections of Winthrop to evacuate their homes before high tide.

The other came from state Civil De-

fense headquarters in Framingham, where director Robert Cunningham wanted him to declare a state of emergency.

Dukakis did both, on the air.

And he also called out the National Guard.

Judging from many of the show's callers, it was difficult to know that the worst blizzard of the century was occurring.

Right after he pleaded with residents of Winthrop Shore drive to evacuate at once, he took a call from a woman who complained about the state's 10 percent tax on unearned income.

The next morning, driven to MDC headquarters in a truck with a scoop

shovel attached, the governor met with Liederman, Sneedeker, MDC official Michael Goldman and another aide, Lou Murray.

It was on this occasion, beginning about eight, that the decision was made that may, in the end, prove the most memorable: The governor banned private driving, with almost no exceptions.

The way had already been paved for such a step. Nearly three hours earlier, after getting a full report on the previous night's devastation, Liederman had begun calling radio and television stations with the message that people should stay in their homes.

At that meeting, the decision was virtually automatic. There were no arguments; it was clear to all that this was the only way to give street plows a

fighting chance against the mountains of snow.

Nor was there any serious attempt at prior consultation with city and town officials. Instead, the governor and his aides consulted a statute book for their legal support.

Later that morning, Dukakis also asked that arrangements be made for him to go on all area TV stations, through the pooled facilities of nearby Channel 7.

He would appear on television three more times that day, and at least once a day thereafter until the end of the weekend.

Usually he spoke with just a few notes, but occasionally he ad libbed — in clear, concise syntax. He imparted the day's vital information, issued or-

ders and advice; in short he was in complete command.

It worked beyond what anyone had imagined, so well in fact that one of the better bits of trivia from the storm Monday was the buried impact of an announcement by Middlesex County Sheriff John Buckley that he would seek the Republican nomination for governor this fall.

Jimmy Carter's Washington awoke Tuesday morning with a little of New England's snow on the ground and a big request in the air. In the middle of the night, Rhode Island Gov. J. Joseph Garrahy had phoned the new head of the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration, William Wilcox.



# THESE PEOPLE DIED IN THE BLIZZARD OF THE CENTURY



**RONALD G. THOMPSON, 38.**  
56 Branch st., Mansfield.  
State DPW employee.

Storm's first victim ... crushed to death between a truck and wind-blown skidding auto on Route 128, in Dedham, while filling potholes Monday, Feb. 6.



**EDWARD HART, 62.**  
Rebecca road, Scituate  
Heavy Equipment Operator, Scituate Department of Public Works.

Drowned when small boat capsized during attempt to rescue Hart and his wife, Alice, from their Rebecca road home and Mrs. Sally Lanzikos and her daughter, Amy, 5. Amy was lost along with Hart when the seawall broke and the people in the boat were swept into Scituate Harbor. Mrs. Hart and Mrs. Lanzikos were saved by two Scituate call firefighters.



**MATTHEW LAWTON, 11**  
21 Glenwood av., Winchester.  
Fifth grade, Noonan School.

Shoveling out a car in Lawton driveway with a friend Jay Gangi, the two crawled inside almost snow-covered station wagon and started engine to warm it up, something Matthew did often for his family. Windows were closed and they died of carbon monoxide fumes.



**JOHN (JAY) GANGI, 12**  
22 Glenwood av., Winchester.  
Sixth grade, Noonan School.

Jay Gangi and Matthew Lawton were found by Matthew's older brother, Kevin, and his father but despite resuscitation attempts by family, neighbors and police, it was too late.



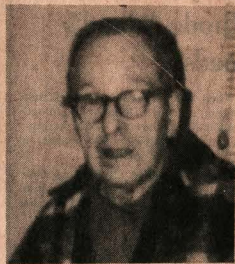
**CLAIRE M. YOUNG, 50**  
4 Pine Cone rd., Canton.  
Housewife.

Died of carbon monoxide fumes while driving home after taking a friend for cancer therapy. Car bogged down, virtually buried in snow. Women remained in the vehicle, engine running. The tailpipe clogged with snow and they were overcome.



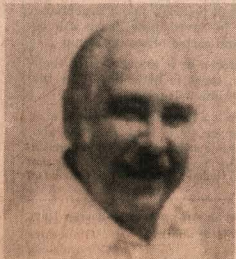
**CHASE COGGINS, 20**  
48 Islington rd., Newton  
Yale student

Struck and killed by commuter train in Auburndale as he was skiing along the Penn Central railroad tracks. A senior at Yale, he had taken the winter semester off, and was skiing to work because of Newton driving ban. He was a senior ski instructor at Weston Ski Trail.



**WILLIAM C. SWANSON, 81**  
7 Fenmere av., Wellesley  
House painter

Died of heart attack suffered while shoveling snow off the roof of his home at 5:45 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 7.



**CALVIN K. SCHNELLER, 54**  
36 Marshall rd., Wellesley

Executive, Kennecott Copper Corp., Lexington

Died of heart attack while shoveling snow at home, 11:34 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 7.



**CAPT. FRANK E. QUIRK, 49.**  
58 Warren st. extension, Peabody.

Skipper of Gloucester pilot boat Can Do.

Drowned in sinking of Can Do while attempting to aid Greek tanker.



**DONALD WILKINSON, 36.**  
9 Wildon Heights, Rockport.

Crewman aboard "Can Do."

Drowned in sea tragedy.



**DAVID CURLEY, 35.**  
10 Flume rd., Magnolia

Crewman aboard Can Do

Drowned in sea tragedy



**KENNETH FULLER, 34**  
112 Sandy Bay terrace  
Gloucester

Crewman aboard Can Do

Drowned in sea tragedy



**CHARLES BUCKO, 29**  
63 Niles Hill rd., New London, Conn.

Crewman aboard Can Do

Drowned in sea tragedy, body not yet recovered



**NORMAN J. CARDIN, 20**  
North Main st., Millbury.

Employee, Felters Company, Millbury.

Died of asphyxiation in his snow-covered car stuck on Rte. 290, Shrewsbury. He had left work the evening of Feb. 6 and headed for a friend's home in Worcester. The car was found around noon on Feb. 8. Cardin was wrapped in a blanket, his head on a pillow.



**JOHN J. Mc DONOUGH, 58**  
Hanover.

Boston firefighter, Lightin Plant 1.

Died of a heart attack suffered on Feb. 8 while battling small blaze on third rail of MBTA at South Station.



**ADNNERYS OSORIO, 4**  
Washington street, Jamaica Plain.

Killed in five-alarm fire in apartments in 3500 block of Washington st. on Feb. 10. Two other children were thrown from a second-floor window into deep snow drifts and were unharmed.



**CYNTHIA SANTIAGO, 5**  
Washington street, Jamaica Plain

In same Jamaica Plain fire in which Adnnerys Osorio died.



**CHARLES LUTHER, 67**  
307 Waverly av., Watertown

Retired tree surgeon, Town of Watertown

Died of a heart attack while shoveling at his home Thursday, Feb. 9.



**DANIEL SCADDING, 17**  
16 King st., Watertown.

Senior, Home Base School, Watertown.

Went to home of a neighborhood friend and climbed into car in driveway to sit. Engine had been running but was shut off when Scadding got into car; he was overcome by carbon monoxide fumes remaining. The friend thought Scadding had gone home.



**DONNA LEE PORTER, 15**  
357 Phillips st., Hanson.

Sophomore, Whitman-Hanson Regional High School.

With three friends, walked to a shopping center for lunch on Feb. 8. On way home, she stepped on a live electric wire (8000 volts) buried in the snow and was thrown into a coil of wire in snowbank.



**CORNELIUS LYNCH, 62**  
121 Thompson st., Hyde Park

Attendant, State Dept. of Mental Health

En route to second job as security guard when car got stuck in snow on Route 138 in Canton. Body found in snowbank at 6:30 a.m. Tuesday. Cause of death undetermined.



**GEORGE URBAN, 62**  
145 Manchester Terrace, Springfield

Died of a heart attack on Monday while pushing stalled car.



**MARY L. MULLIN, 62**  
52 West 7th st., South Boston.

Housewife.

She turned on gas stove when heat went off in her apartment. Gas flame burned up the oxygen, producing deadly carbon monoxide. Her son, Paul Anthony, 24, was treated for fumes inhalation. Mrs. Mullin suffered from emphysema and asthma.



**PETER GOSSELEIN, 10**  
Mary Jane avenue, Uxbridge.

Fourth grade, Taft School.

Missing since 10 a.m. on Feb. 7. Last seen shoveling snow at the grandmother's home. Police theorize he may have been trapped under snow bank. Snow-removal equipment has been used in search, but no trace had been found by Thursday.



**HARRY NUNES, 37**  
1680 Washington st., South Walpole

Insurance salesman

Missing with his car since night of Feb. 6 when he called home to report he had just freed vehicle from snow in Boston's North End and that he was en route home.

**MISSING**



cluding Middlesex and Worcester, and let the White House take the rap for turning them down.

At first, five counties were acceptable to the White House: Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Plymouth and Bristol. A telegram requesting a disaster designation for them was sent to the White House Friday morning.

Rep. Gerry Studds had heard about all this and he was livid because it did not include three flood-damaged counties in his district: Dukes, Barnstable and Nantucket. Also on Friday, after Studds was told that those counties would also be acceptable, a second telegram was sent to the White House.

At four that afternoon, the President declared a "major disaster in the state of Massachusetts as a result of coastal flooding."

But the Massachusetts people kept trying for more. O'Neill kept pressing for the inclusion of Worcester and Middlesex counties and an extension of the declaration in the others to include damage from ice and snow.

But Schneiders held firm on adding any more counties. The White House was afraid of the very costly precedent that would be set by making disasters out of snowstorms.

Nonetheless, the White House tried to soften the blow. On the one hand, Carter decided on Tuesday, Feb. 14, to extend the terms of the disaster proclamation to include snow and ice damage on the grounds that it was impossible to distinguish what force of nature had caused the damage in coastal areas.

In addition, a little ruse was concocted. On that same Tuesday, the federal disaster agency "announced" that Worcester and Middlesex counties would be eligible for special Small Business Administration loans. In fact, they are automatically eligible for them under law as areas directly adjacent to a disaster area.

Still, the bottom line is that Massachusetts did unusually well in Washington. The states of New Hampshire and Rhode Island have also filed requests for disaster area status.

To date, they haven't heard a word.

He named his pilot boat Can Do, and when no one else dared challenge a wild sea, Frank Quirk would say, "I've got to give it my best shot."

Gloucester had awarded him two Mariner's Medals for heroism during rescues, defying the sea with his courage, his seamanship and his custom-made boat. On the night of Feb. 6, he set out from Gloucester in the middle of what was to become New England's worst storm of this century, hoping to reach an oil tanker aground in Salem Sound.

It was the last voyage of Frank Quirk's life.

Quirk decided to help. He called the Coast Guard and told him his plan. The Coast Guard called back and told him not to, that the seas were too rough.

But as Quirk told his friend Keith Trefry, the Gloucester harbor master, "I've got to give it my best shot."

The Can Do was under way at 7:36 p.m. by Mark Galinas' watch. The 16-year-old Gloucester High School student was ashore. The last time he had gone out with Capt. Quirk he missed a couple of days of school, and he couldn't do it again.

He had given Bucko his new coat.

Shortly after the Can Do set out, the Coast Guard station asked Quirk to keep a lookout for its 44-footer, which had grounded.

The wind was blowing between 40 and 70 knots, the seas were running 15 to 20 feet, and visibility was 50 yards at best in blinding snow.

The sea smashed Quirk's boat, taking first the Can Do's radar, compass and fathometer. Then it took the power and some of Quirk's blood when an enormous wave shattered the pilot house window where he stood.

Then, the implacable sea took Quirk and the four men who had accompanied him on his last mission.

Much of the rest of the story can be told in Frank Quirk's own words, and finally in his silence.

On the night the Can Do was lost at sea with five aboard, amateur radio ham operator Mel Cole of Beverly was in contact with Capt. Frank Quirk and several unidentified members of the crew. Following are the last messages received from the ship:

(At 10 p.m. the Can Do advised the Coast Guard she would return to Gloucester after a large wave from astern had broken the AM antenna, making the radar inoperative. The Coast Guard later advised the Can Do that high seas prevented an escort mission.)

10:30 p.m. — Quirk: "Really wild out here. Not sure of position."

12 a.m. — Can Do: "Still cannot see Gloucester Harbor entrance."

1 — Unidentified Can Do crew member: "This is not a drill. This is not a drill. May Day. May Day. May Day."

1:20 — Unidentified crew member: "We may have hit the breakerwater."

1:35 — Can Do crew member to Gloucester station: "Lost pilot house window, our radar out. Our position unknown. Action extremely violent."

1:45 — Quirk: "They've patched me up and we're holding our own for now."

1:55 — Can Do crew member shouted: "We've had it."

(At 2:00 a.m. Coast Guard Boston mistakenly advised all stations that the Can Do crew was ashore and safe in Magnolia.)

2:10 — Quirk: "We've got an anchor set and we're holding our own, taking a beating but am trying to build up some power and get things started again."

2:15 — Quirk: "Well, no luck on power. Thirty-two volt batteries all shorted out. I have a mattress stuffed in the

Two bodies are loaded aboard helicopter at Coast Guard Beach in Nahant after washing ashore from the pilot boat "Can Do." The boat had left home port during the storm to assist the Greek oil tanker, "Global Hope," that ran aground off Salem.

window to keep the seas out and the boys have me pretty well patched up from cuts by flying glass. Water's not building in boat."

2:35 — Quirk to Cole: "Mel, getting pretty cold and weak here. Guess the loss of blood caused this. Keep getting wet, too."

2:45 — Cole to Can Do: "Frank, want to try your CB?"

Quirk: "We're pretty well wedged between the table, here. Don't think we'll move. Really rippin' out here. Last attempt on (Channel) three was no good."

3:30 — Quirk: "Beverly Base (Cole), The Can Do. We're getting pretty wet up here. Hatch is loose and we're gonna try to move aft."

Cole: "OK, Frank, take your time and try to get all the cover over you possible. . . . Frank, it's only about two

hours to dawn and latest weather promises abating seas. Gloucester Coast Guard will get a 44-footer going to your position then."

Quirk: "OK, Mel, we'll hold on. Sure wish I could raise some power. It's cold and really hoppin' out here but we're making it."

Cole: "OK, Frank. Don't waste your batteries. You were breaking up on that last transmission. Get some rest and I'll be here when you come back."

4:00 — Cole to Can Do — No answer.

4:30 — Cole to Can Do — No answer.

4:35 — Boston Coast Guard to Cole:

"Are you still able to raise the Can Do?"

Cole: "That's a negative. It has been

over an hour since my last contact. We'll keep trying."

(Cole remained on the air until 10 a.m. Tuesday trying futilely to make contact.)

## Other victims of the storm

MELVIN DEMIT, 61

14 Fox Hill rd., Nahant.

Retired from General Electric Company, Lynn

Drowned when a huge wave struck his basement apartment, engulfing it.

AMY LANZIKOS, 5

64 Rebecca rd., Seituante.

Kindergarten pupil at Central School.

Drowned when small aluminum boat capsized during rescue attempt. Can Fire Capt. Herbert Fulton of Norwell recalled: "Twice I had hold of the little girl, only to lose my grip when waves knocked me from my feet. You wouldn't believe the undertow."

VERNON FARMER, 50

Feeding Hills

Died of a heart attack while shoveling snow on Tuesday, Feb. 7.

JOSEPH DOUCETTE, 46

10 Patrick av., Billerica.

Atlantic Gelatin Corp. employee, Woburn.

Died of a heart attack on Feb. 6 while trying to free his stalled car from deep snow on Cambridge st., Burlington, enroute to work.

MARIE JENNINGS, 59

8 Chestnut rd., Canton.

Widow.

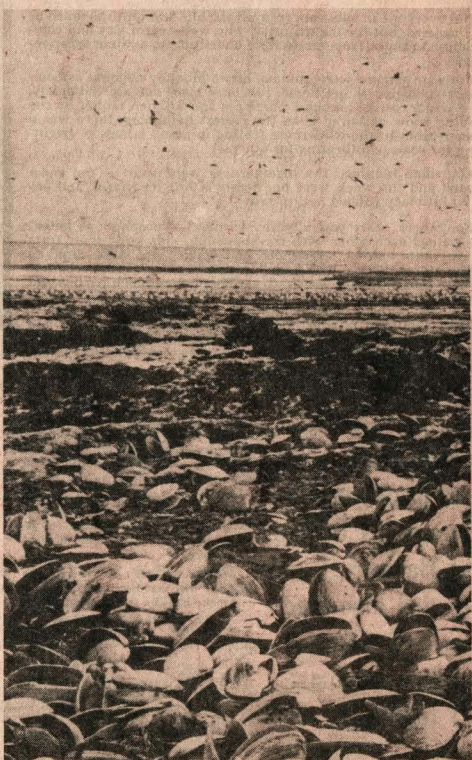
Died in car with Mrs. Young. Mrs. Jennings had driven her to Pondville Hospital, Norfolk, to keep appointment for cancer therapy.

For the seamen of Gloucester, stormy weather means listening to marine radios. After lunch at the Cape Ann Marina Lounge, Quirk headed for The High Performance Marina where the Can Do was docked to listen to the radios and put the finishing touches on a boat that was always shipshape and spotless.

Late in the afternoon, his friends Dave Warner, Kenny Fuller, Dave Curley, Charlie Bucko and young Mark Galinas came aboard.

Shortly after 6 p.m., the six heard the Greek-registered tanker Global Hope radio the Coast Guard station at Gloucester. The message was difficult to hear, but the ship apparently was taking on water in the engine room and its captain believed the hull was split.

At 6:12 p.m. the Coast Guard dispatched three vessels to aid Global Hope: a 44-foot rescue boat from the Gloucester station, the 210-foot cutter Decisive from waters off Cape Cod and the 95-foot patrol boat Cape George.



## THE SUBURBS STIRRED AFTER THE SNOW STOPPED

From the windows of the roomy old brown house at the top of Crown Ridge road in Wellesley, Jan Putnam watched the blizzard Monday night with unabashed glee. She loves storms.

She had been at a meeting in Boston when the first flakes started falling. Her husband, Eliot, was at his job in Chestnut Hill in Newton and the four kids were in various Wellesley schools. By about 7 p.m. everybody had made it home safely and assembled around the living room fireplace with the two dogs and the cat.

"Mostly we just sat here and marveled," she says. "There is a big rock just outside and the drifts kept forming over it and changing shapes. It was like a continuing show. We kept going outside and calling each other to look at it."

Not everyone in suburbia enjoyed the blizzard quite as much as the Putnams, but for the majority, who were warm, dry and comfortable, it ranged from an exciting adventure to a minor inconvenience.

For many, there were anxious hours Monday evening as commuters struggled to get home. But once everyone arrived safely, there was a coziness around fireplaces and kitchen tables. As the blinding snow obscured even the closest neighbors, there was a pioneer-cabin-in-the-wilderness feeling in many homes — frightening for some, exhilarating for others.

For some families, the togetherness went sour as the snow stopped and the week wore on. Scrabble lost its charm, and enforced intimacy rubbed nerves raw.

For others, there was a winter carnival atmosphere as neighbors helped each other with the shoveling, kids built snow forts and the hardy skied, snowshoed and walked on "milk runs" to nearby stores. People who hadn't gotten beyond "Good morning" in years found themselves chatting. There were block parties and "snowbound" dinners.

Most suburban blizzard stories were low-key of warmth and boredom, of small kindnesses and petty irritations, of thankfulness for good fortune and nagging guilt as scenes of devastation paraded across the TV screen.

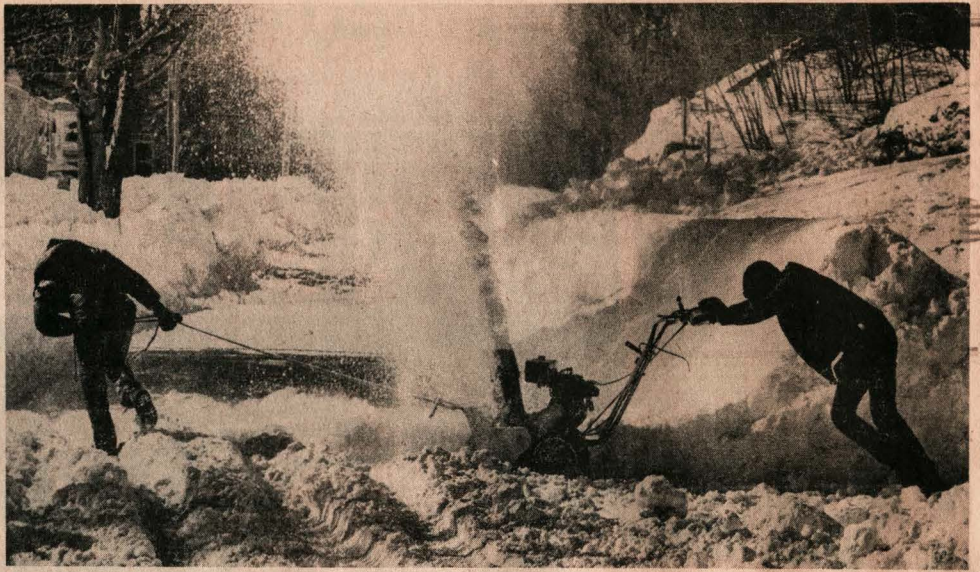
Up the hill on Crown Ridge, next door to the Putnams, Charles and Barbara Steward also had heard the weather reports, and they took them seriously.

On Monday morning, Charles took the train to Boston to his job in the development section of the MBTA and his wife went to the grocery to fill in the gaps in their supplies.

They had a freezer full of produce from their own garden, a wood stove in the family room and a garage full of wood they cut themselves in New Hampshire.

Barbara Steward's only worry that Monday was that her husband would not make it home from Boston. When he finally arrived about 7 p.m., after a mile walk from the train station in the driving snow, she was vastly relieved.

On Tuesday, the Stewards, along with all the neighbors, began the shoveling out that would go on all week. On Wednesday, they called around to neighbors who live alone to see if anyone needed anything. On Thursday, Charles went back to work, by public transit.



It took two persons and a fearless little snowblower to clean out a driveway on Beacon street in Marblehead. Above, a line forms in front of the fire engine in Canton for free milk and eggs supplied by the town. Right, snowmobiles deliver food and milk in Squantum.

"We've snowshoed all around and we've worked our way through all the games. I won't mind when school opens again," she says. "We were comfortable. I felt so sorry for those people on the coast who lost everything. We felt very guilty, as though we had no right to be that comfortable."

In between shoveling, the Putnams played card games and worked on a jigsaw puzzle.

On Wednesday, when some of the stores opened, they took a backpack

and made the first of what became many trips down the hill to the grocery.

"It was wonderful. Everybody was out walking and talking to each other. All the sleds were lined up outside the supermarket..."

"We had invited friends over to dinner on Saturday night and, obviously, they couldn't come. On Friday, Eliot and I both had the same idea at the same time — why not have a block party? So we invited all the neighbors and they all brought things.

"It's been marvelous. I hated to see the plow come down the street."



# IN THE CITY, SIGNS OF LIFE SLOWLY BEGAN TO REAPPEAR

Mary Murphy was alone, as usual, in her Clapp street home, just off Dorchester avenue, when the first vague snow predictions came in Sunday night.

A 64-year-old diabetic amputee with a pacemaker in her heart, she and her salt-and-pepper poodles get by on her \$292.60 disability check each month.

She counted and recounted her remaining \$35 in food stamps and prayed the sisters from St. Margaret's convent around the corner would not forget to call.

A sixth sense also troubled dark-haired Frank Costa, 40, who for 14 years has been running a lively variety store named for his wife, Audrey, on "D Ave."

Sunday night, hearing reports on the radio of a possible snowstorm, he asked a brother-in-law to deliver some extra food to Audrey in Randolph where they had moved five years ago. As for Costa, he decided to sleep on a cot in the store's back room in hopes of catching delivery men early Monday morning for extra supplies.

He wanted to be in Dorchester, he told his wife, because "My people are here. This is a tighter group than in the suburbs."

Indeed, it was, and by the end of the week, the storm was to bring out the best — and a bit of the worst — not only along "D Ave," but in dozens of neighborhoods across the city.

It wasn't until noon Monday, when most people still scoffed at snow reports, that 51-year-old Tom Kelly, a muscular man with "Mother" tattooed across his right bicep, began to worry.

Leaving the family car in an indoor garage at UMass-Boston, where he works, he hitched a ride back to the neighborhood. There, he brought in six oil lamps from the backyard cabana and several armloads of wood for the fireplace.

His wife, Marion, 48, hustled up the

street to Bond's Market, across from Audrey's, for four more pounds of hamburger and pork chops.

Harold Shuman, the owner of Bond's and a ruddy faced butcher who, like Frank Costa, lives in Randolph, would normally have been closed by 1 p.m. Monday. But this Monday he was late, stocking in an extra order of fish for his Catholic customers. Ash Wednesday was only two days away.

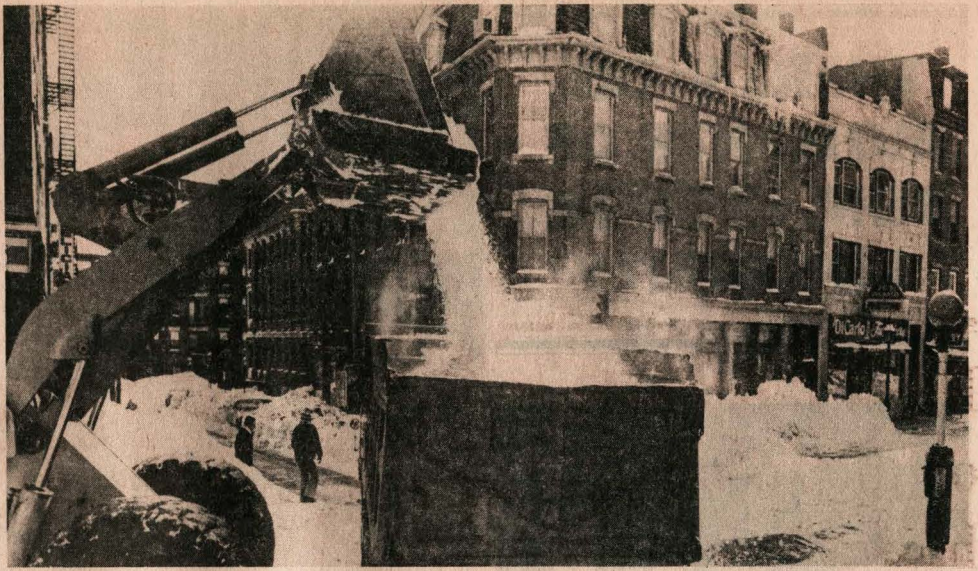
He didn't know it, but the fish would come in handy for a totally different reason. After it was put away, Shuman drove home.

Around the corner on Buttonwood street, Loraine Perkins, 33, minded her six children and worried about Larry. Her freezer was stocked with the family's \$400 monthly shopping trip four days before. Larry was out driving his cab for Smith Taxi, taking kidney dialysis patients to Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. He didn't get home for an hour and a half. By then it was snowing so hard he could scarcely see the road.

By Tuesday morning, as the snow continued to pile up, Harold Shuman was stranded in Randolph, livid.

Tuesdays he gets deliveries from Andover and makes the fresh kielbasa sausage his Polish-American customers crave.

"Me A grocer," he lamented to his wife. "I can't open my own store and I have to walk to a convenience mart because my own wife has nothing in the house." The Bond Market would not re-



Few stood around to watch what became a common sight — snow removal — on Hanover street in the North End. But people did plenty of standing around.

open until Thursday, and the delivery would not come for six days.

Loraine Perkins, like mothers up and down the block, sent her kids to check on shut-ins. Frank Costa urged the neighborhood boys to "knock on the doors of all the elderly — and don't you take a dime for it."

The telephone was insistent. Mary Murphy crawled as fast as her good leg would let her. Thank God. Jim and Flavia Burke next door were wondering if she needed food. She needed to be helped to her feet and to her walker.

Tom and Marion Kelly sat in the kitchen and rued the day they had stood in Lechmere's and decided against that snowblower. Tom finally made a reluctant trudge upstairs to spend the day painting the apartment of his three-decker.

As Tuesday night fell, Frank Costa gave up all hope of returning to Randolph. With the snow still coming down, he headed over to O'Malley's for a couple of beers, cheered only by the thought that friends were bringing him some dinner at the store and that his supplies were still holding out.

But by Wednesday morning, "The mob was starting to rise. I was the only one open."

Within minutes after the store opened, his bread and milk disappeared. He called brothers-in-law Bobby and George Sharon in Randolph and Abington. They got a truck from their aluminum siding business and set out through the unplowed roads for the Wonder bread plant in Braintree, then to the West Lynn Creamery for 30 cases of milk.

Shortly after noon, the power went out all over D Ave.

Loraine Perkins set about making a huge pot of spaghetti for her brood and many of the neighbors. George Crozier, next door, brought over his Coleman lantern — "no use of me having it all alone" — and Buttonwood street gathered around the Perkins' kitchen gas heater.

Alone, Mary Murphy sat tight. She had two Hungry-Man frozen dinners left.

Audrey's was full when the lights went off, just about the time the brothers-in-law arrived with the milk and bread. As a few people began grabbing food off the truck, Costa called upstairs for help from his sister-in-law Mary Sharon and her friend Nancy. They rang up sales on a hand calculator and

bagged the groceries as the supplies rapidly disappeared.

The power was still out all along D Ave. as Tom Kelly began the task that would occupy most of his next 72 hours — plowing side streets because "the city plows couldn't do nothin'."

For equipment, he trudged to a nearby construction firm and borrowed a backhoe that used to be his own in his days in the business.

As he plowed, a young friend of his family came along with a girl friend. The girl had just heard that her 25-year-old brother had been found dead in bed in South Boston. The only way they could get through the snow was in Kelly's plow, and that's how they went. Kelly took the couple over to Southie, returned and kept plowing through the night.

Frank Costa finally closed his store late Wednesday afternoon — "it was about 5:30. I was dead on my feet." He was ready to get into his truck when a young man rushed up to him: "Frankie, you're the only one with a truck. Can you take my mother to the hospital?"

It was late that night when Costa finally made it home to Randolph, after taking Josephine Kunevich to Boston

City Hospital. Strangely, after four days away from home, he couldn't sleep that night. He was too tired.

Not far away in Randolph, Harold Shuman was breathing his first sigh of relief.

His butcher, Albert Flanzbaum, had walked with his sleeping bag the seven miles from his Milton home to the Bond Market and had opened up, just as the power came back on Wednesday night.

He checked the freezers and called Shuman. "I'm the employer and I'm stuck out in Randolph," mused Shuman, "while he, the employee, got in. Without my even asking."

Thursday morning, Sister Mary Gavin got worried about Mary Murphy. She gathered up some supplies from the convent and crawled over the snowdrifts to Clapp street.

When she arrived, Mary Murphy greeted her calmly. She was nearly out of food and had only a two-day supply of life-sustaining medicines. But her homemaker had promised to come the next day and to stop at the drugstore and the welfare office for a food voucher en route.

Mary Murphy would weather the storm.

Judy Foreman

# THERE WERE MOMENTS OF FUN, EVEN IN ADVERSITY



Now it can be told:

A Harvard Square bartender, who kept his place open throughout the great blizzard, realized on Tuesday, at the height of the storm, that his beer stock was running perilously low. He rented a truck with a snow plow on it, roared along snow-drifted, deserted streets to his Boston supplier, purchased 45 cases of brew, stashed it under a tarp, and raced back to succor his thirsty customers.

When someone suggested he'd violated the no-driving state of emergency, the saloon keeper — who asked to remain anonymous — retorted: "Hell, this WAS an emergency."

As soon as the sun came up last Wednesday, they appeared: the joggers. Those dedicated runners who never miss a day rain or shine. The only thing that keeps them from running is something like, well, a blizzard.

But some of those who were out running Wednesday and Thursday had not planned on it.

Like Leon Schwarz of Chestnut Hill, president of Leewood Corp. of Haverhill. He was stranded at his office since Monday and decided to go home on Thursday, but only made it to Reading, where he was forced to abandon his car at a checkpoint.

Schwarz, a marathon runner for the last three years, jugged the rest of the way home, about 30 miles. It took him 4½ hours.

There was some confusion as Gov. Michael S. Dukakis gradually lifted his driving ban, but always defined those who were exempt from the ban as "essential personnel."

But who were the essential personnel?

"Doctors, policemen, firemen, nurses, utility company work crews," said a MDC police officer, who paused and added: "And anyone else who has a good story."

At the quaint pharmacy in the center of Dover, the natives decided on a novel means of using a local gathering spot to help pass the time during the driving ban.

The place happens also to sell liquor, but a few townspeople took things a bit further. They set up cocktail tables, opened wine (only the best, of course), poured it into elegant wine glasses and offered passersby an interesting variation on the old soda fountain theme.

Three Cambridge architects, and a passerby who stopped to help, created a



For some, the blizzard meant a time for dancing in the street, sculpturing, painting — and just strolling around.

massive snow and ice version of the ancient Greek "Dying Warrior" and won a citywide snow sculpture contest last week.

Within hours of the Cambridge Arts Council's radio announcement of the contest, Huron avenue architects Webb Nichols and Jeff Millman began packing snow into a 10-foot by 10-foot by 4-foot slab, like marble. With architect Soren Rono and passerby Rich Pastor, they carved out the warrior's resting body and shield, working from scale-model drawings.

Runners-up in the contest were a dragon, "The Pearl St. Monster," by Diane Greene, Fred Fallor and Chris Clamp; "Man Climbing a Tree," by Janet Wheeler and Chris Walters; and, in the children's category, "Cyclops," by Jim Cronin, Basil Mullins and Ken Lyons; and "Jaws III," by Frank Pointdexter and Mark Sanders.

For those lucky enough not to suffer during the storm, there was no more widely visible symbol of leisure than skis.

On Boston Common. On suburban streets. In parks.

And of course, in Cambridge.

In fact, so many people took to their skis in the area around Harvard Square, that city fathers, desperate to get the streets plowed, issued the only recorded extension of the ban on driving.

They applied it to skiing as well.



# THE 5 WORST STORMS IN NEW ENGLAND — UNTIL NOW

Natural disasters are no strangers to New England. They have visited here many times and in many forms. Here are five of the worst to hit the region in the past 90 years:

## The Blizzard of 1888

No other storm buried as much of the region under such deep snow as the famous blizzard of March 11-14, which wrought death and destruction from Maine all the way to Virginia.

More than 400 died. Some suffocated in the fine snow or froze in the streets in temperatures that ranged to 40 below zero. Winds gusting at 70 miles an hour piled up drifts 30 feet deep. Along the coast, 216 vessels were lost.

New Haven measured an official fall of 46 inches, and nearby Middletown, Conn., had 50 inches. Most of the Berkshires, the southern Green Mountains of Vermont and the hills of Southern New Hampshire reported 36 inches or more. Northern Maine had 20 inches.

The storm, which stalled over Block Island, R.I., for most of two days, brought a mixture of rain and snow to the southeastern corner of New England from New London to Boston. Nine inches of slush accumulated here. Cape Cod got almost all rain.

## 1938 Hurricane

The storm struck almost without warning and with unprecedented force the afternoon of Sept. 21, coming ashore at Long Island and cutting a swath through the heartland of New England. At least 600 were killed and nearly 2000 injured. The Red Cross estimated property damage at \$387 million.

Winds along the shore exceeded 100 miles an hour. At Blue Hills, south of Boston, a sustained speed of 121 miles an hour was recorded, with gusts up to 186 mph. The storm roared through New England to Canada in about five hours at a speed of slightly more than 50 miles an hour.

The greatest damage and loss of life was caused by the tidal surge along the shores of Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Waves 40 feet high crashed over exposed beaches. The coincidence of high tide and the storm's arrival raised levels to record heights.

Flooding was especially severe in downtown Providence, where the height of the water was recorded at 13 feet, 8.5 inches. In the interior of New England, whole forests were blown down and all rivers were in high flood. Throughout the area 4500 buildings were destroyed, more than 15,000 damaged, and 2600 boats were lost.

## Hurricane Diane, 1955

Diane caused comparatively little damage as a windstorm but as a rainstorm she was a record-breaker and brought the worst flooding ever experienced in southern New England on Aug. 17-19. The area had been saturated less than a week before by rains from Hurricane Connie.

In Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, Diane was responsible for 90 deaths, 6882 major injuries, losses by 21,745 families and damage estimated at \$600 million. Loss was so widespread that it took federal officials a month to gather enough facts to put together a total.

The hurricane hit New England with a sneak punch. Residents went to bed with a forecast of "showers." They woke to find normally placid streams turned into raging torrents. In Westfield 19.76 inches of rain fell, the greatest precipitation from any tropical storm ever to hit the region. New Haven had almost 14 inches.

The Connecticut Valley in western Massachusetts and Connecticut was inundated. As the flood waters roared down on residents, hundreds took refuge on the roofs of their houses or in tree-tops where they clung for hours before rescuers could reach them. Many others, with no time to escape, died in their beds.



## 1936 Floods

All New England suffered in mid-March flooding brought on by days of heavy rain and thawing. In Pinkham Notch, N.H., 6.46 inches fell on the 12th, 6.27 inches on the 16th and 4.68 inches on the 19th. Eight inches or more fell around Worcester and in the Berkshires.

Damage in Maine exceeded that from any other recorded flood. Ice jams formed on all the state's rivers. At least 81 bridges required reconstruction, and railroad travel was brought to a halt.

All previous high-water records were broken in the Merrimack Valley. In Hooksett, N.H., water 20 feet deep flowed through the main street. Mills and factories in Lawrence, Haverhill and Lowell suffered tremendous damage. Record crests were reached along the Connecticut River, up to 16.8 feet above normal at Holyoke.

The water at Hartford rose 8.6 feet higher than any previous level and inundated most of the downtown business section. Throughout New England, loss of life was small, but damage estimated in excess of \$100 million made the floods the costliest weather disaster up to that time.

## 1953 Worcester Tornado

The black funnel cloud touched ground in Petersham just after 4:25 p.m. on June 9 and cut a 46-mile path through Barre, Rutland, Holden, Worcester, Shrewsbury, Westboro, Southboro and Fayville.

It was all over in 80 minutes. Within that brief span 94 persons were killed, nearly 1300 injured, and \$53 million in damage was caused. The storm's force was such that buildings literally exploded. Along its course, after it had passed, lay nothing but cellar holes and piles of kindling.

The path of destruction broadened through the populous Holden-Worcester-Shrewsbury area, a distance of eight miles, where the damage width averaged three-quarters of a mile and reached almost a mile in places. These localities suffered most of the death, injuries and property loss.

The tornado, heading southeast, crossed the Worcester Turnpike at Rte. 140 in Shrewsbury, swerved eastward three miles to cut through the southern section of Westboro and then began to narrow as it ran parallel to the present Massachusetts Turnpike. It recrossed Rte. 9 into Fayville and vanished a mile and a half beyond.



# An editorial — What have we learned?

It was the blizzard of a century, a fury of snow and wind and seawater, an act of nature more awesome than most of us have ever seen, more destructive than we are likely to see again.

For those who could look out at snowy woods — or even snowy tenements — from the windows of snug houses, the storm heaped the world with beauty. For those who drove out into the winds, or stayed in their homes by the sea, or trusted to crisis-free energy, or insisted on resuming their routines, the storm brought inconvenience, or suffering, or even death.

The storm of Feb. 6 was uniquely harsh, and it taught its lessons, to unprepared government and to foolhardy people, with unique severity. The human will that conquered the storm, or rather endured it and faced up to its aftermath, was not unique.

As always when mankind is tested by nature, decency and selflessness prevailed. Strangers saved each other's lives and parted without even knowing each other's names. Policemen and firemen and bureaucrats struggled without sleep. Homeowners along highways took in the stranded who slogged to their doors. Restless families obeyed emergency law and kept their cars off the roads — voluntarily, for there were not enough officials to compel them.

The much-publicized looters were the merest fraction of the populace, and they committed less crime than besets Boston in a normal day.

Now, night by night the work crews are carting away the drifts that still remind us of the storm. Day by day the homeless are rebuilding their houses. The armories and road stops and movie theaters have been cleared, the makeshift soup kitchens disassembled,

the banks and stores reopened. Bills have been passed to give unemployment compensation to those who lost several days' pay.

Soon the storm will be romance for most of us, memories recalled to break the humdrum. In the press of getting back to work, or recovering from the costly leisure of lost days, we may forget the common sense the storm forced upon us. We may forget about the necessity to prepare for the next storm. Perhaps more dangerous, we may forget how vulnerable to nature we are and will remain, no matter what our preparation.

### What have we learned?

We have learned, or should have learned, that weathermen are sometimes right, and when they forecast a major storm we should listen and believe and not try to prove our courage driving into the darkening day.

We have learned that the precautions of our less affluent childhood — keeping kerosene lamps and canned foods and warm blankets and firewood on hand, to guard against the times when heat and power and supermarkets are shut off — still are the means to survival and some comfort.

We have learned that it is not enough to get our cars home, and it is not fair to leave them on the street to ease our departure when the morning plowing is through. Many suburban side streets took nearly a week to clear because car owners parked on streets instead of driveways, hoping not to have to shovel through the snowbanks left by plows.

We have learned that not all of us are essential, that most of us can cope for a few days with inconvenience, that emotionally we depend, perhaps too

much, on mobility and a steady flow of information.

These are moral lessons, lessons of character and cooperation.

We have learned practical lessons, too, lessons our government should heed, at our insistence.

The driving ban emburdened public transportation, and despite valiant work the MBTA proved it was not ready for the task. In the worst of the storm the MBTA's cars kept edging through the tunnels, and at times they were, impressively, the only thing moving in Boston at all.

But the 16 miles of tunnels are not particularly useful when they are blocked by stalled trains and isolated from the 45 miles of surface track. The MBTA must find better storage room in its tunnels, particularly for the Red Line, which was cut off from its Cabot yards at the height of the storm. It must also examine the possibility of buying diesel-electric units for plowing the surface and for retrieving stalled trains.

Highways in the suburbs are essential to the survival of the cities — they bring people in to jobs. Those roads took many days to clear, because motorists were not warned enough by toll-takers, by police, even by emergency signs, that drivers should take shelter rather than push on for home.

And many parts of Route 128 were further blocked by jackknifed trucks, perhaps because of poor visibility, but perhaps also because of lax rules. States in the West do not have this problem in blizzards. Their licensing procedures, and possible provisions for anti-jackknifing equipment on truck bodies, deserve more study and more action than the Legislature's lamented "overloaded trucks" commission produced.

Gov. Dukakis and MDC enforcers led the way to recovery. But mayors must have a role in preparation. In cities they should develop plans for increased fines and towing fees in snow emergencies — coupled with plans for off-street parking in commercial lots and garages, in schoolyards, playgrounds, and shopping centers, at low cost or free, with police surveillance to protect the cars of citizens who cooperate.

In suburbs they must work with private and school bus lines to create an alternative way of getting emergency workers into the city.

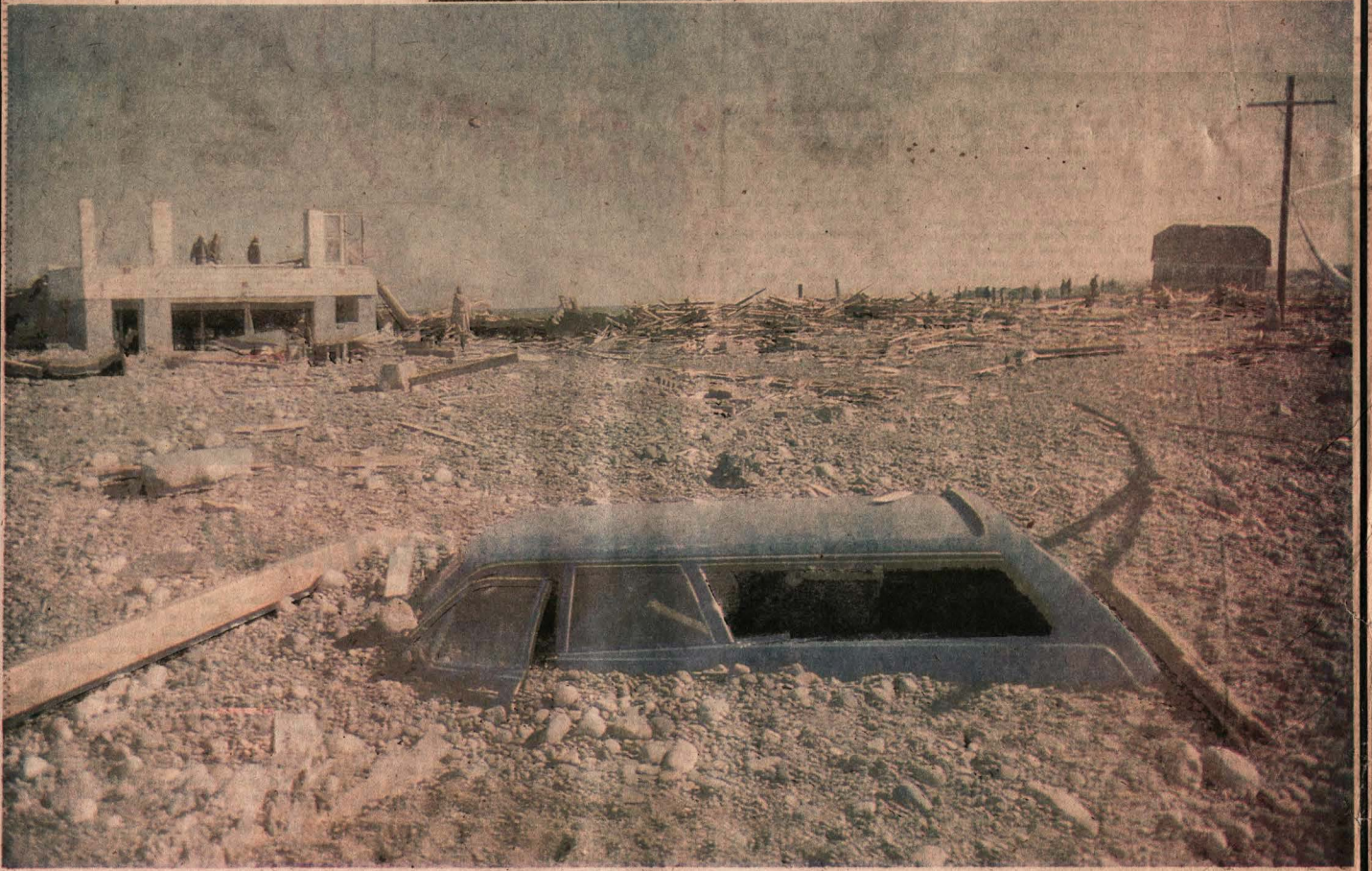
The storm taught us positive things, beyond endurance.

For a few days we saw cities as only urban evangelists have envisioned them — free of cars, free of dirt and noise pollution, with streets safe for walking and public transportation in full use all day.

We cannot expect the storm to change us fundamentally, nor even to modify for long our daily ways. Not many of us will give up our cars entirely for commuter trains and buses. Not many will be as self-sacrificing day after day as we were in those urgent hours. And our leaders will obviously not be able to make the next emergency risk-free.

Against catastrophes of nature, man has to be sensible, to wait and endure. In the traditions of this region we endured well, nobly, even heroically.

But in remembering proudly our endurance in this crisis let us not forget the modest efforts we can make now to prepare ourselves better for those we may face in the future.



Single-family, year-round residence on Central avenue in the Humarock section of Scituate collapsed (top) under the relentless battering of the sea. Below, station wagon lies buried in sand and stone, mute testimony to the fury of

the storm in Scituate's Mann Hill Beach area. At left, 14-year-old Brett Bindick peers from window of his ice-encrusted house on Ocean View avenue in Revere. It was a storm he and others will long remember.

**CREDITS**

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