

NOW YOU SEE IT, now you don't. Inset show intrepid motorist making way across New River on Peoria Avenue 12 days ago, when storm waters from previous days had washed away third of roadway. One day later two-thirds

of road had disappeared. Current photo shows no evidence that pavement ever existed in river bed following new heavy runoffs.

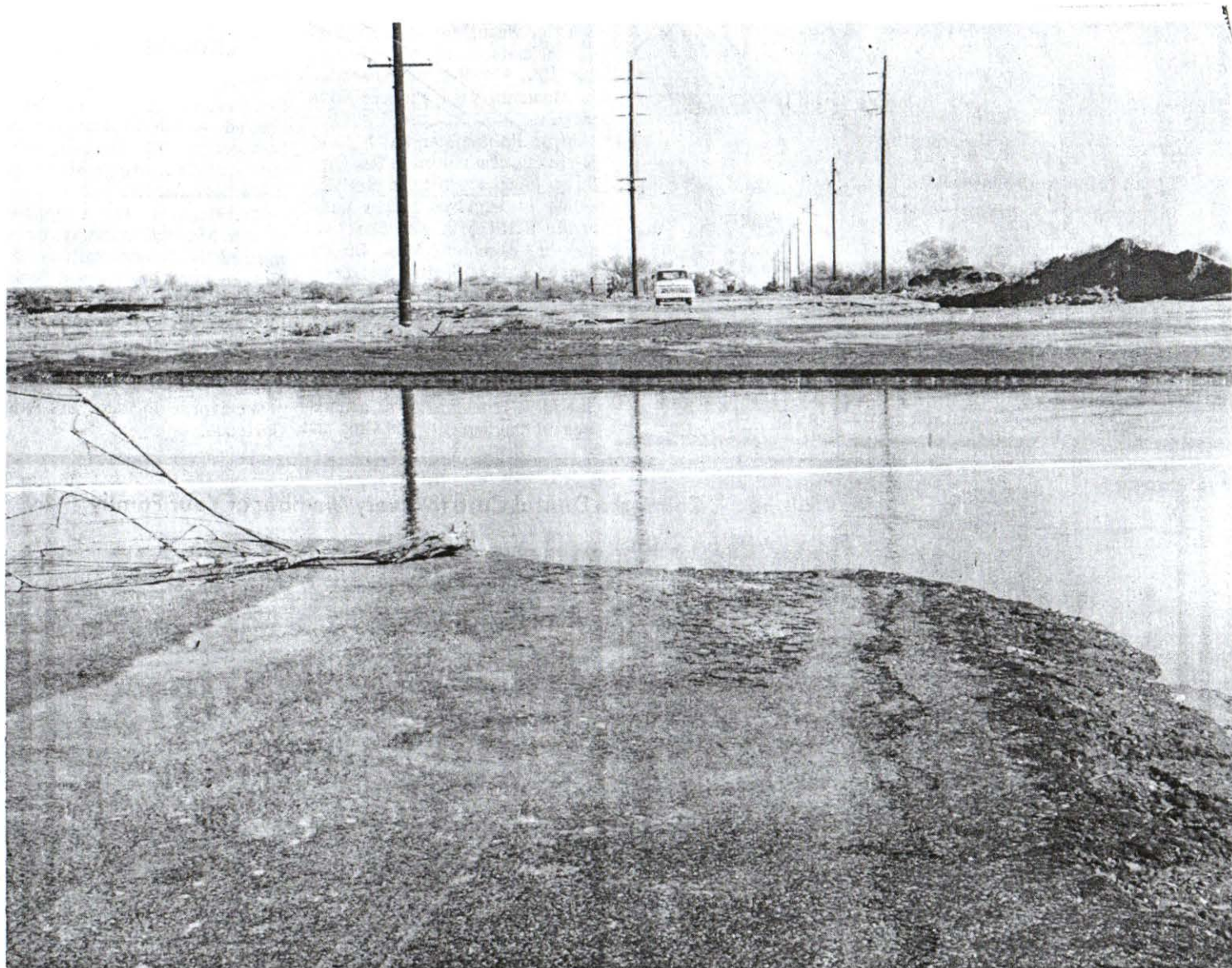
(News-Sun Staff Photo)



ROADBED CAVE-IN on Peoria Avenue left this vehicle stranded as storm waters raged down New River Sunday morning. Ignoring signs marking road impassible, Helen Mary Schwartz of 9915 Audrey Dr. attempted crossing but muddy water blocked washout from her view. County high-

way maintenance man carried her to safety shortly before road gave way completely under weight of auto and left car about three feet below paving level.

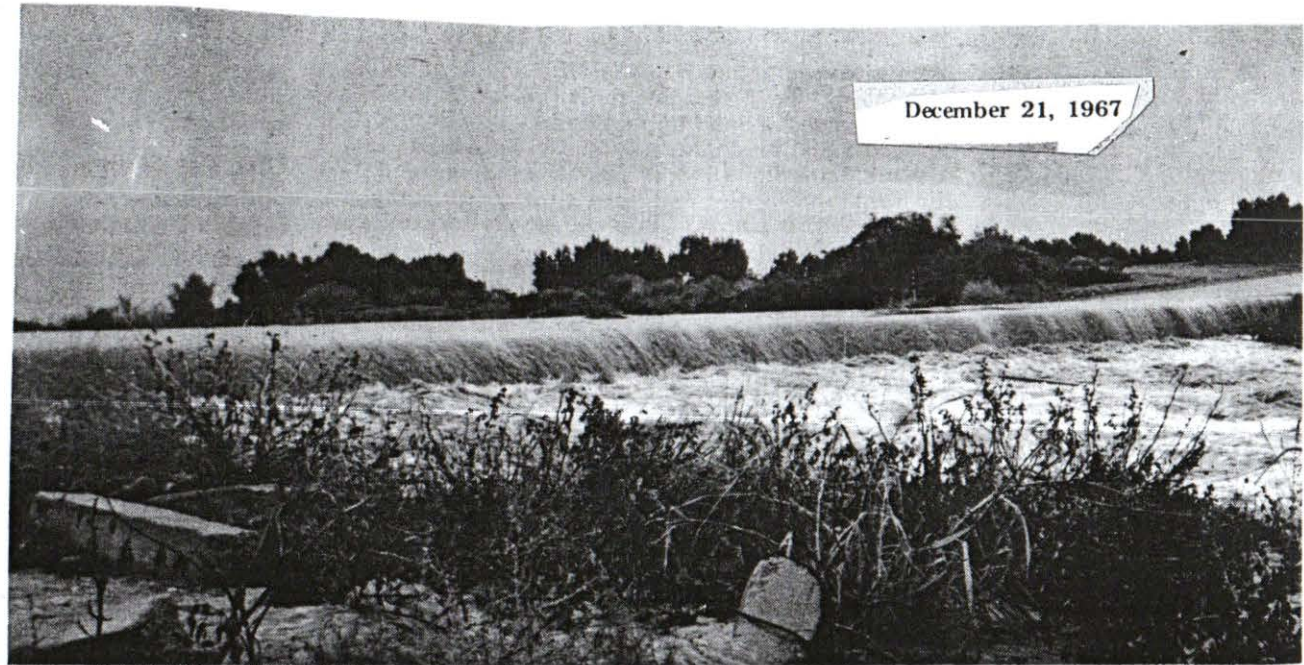
(News-Sun Staff Photo)



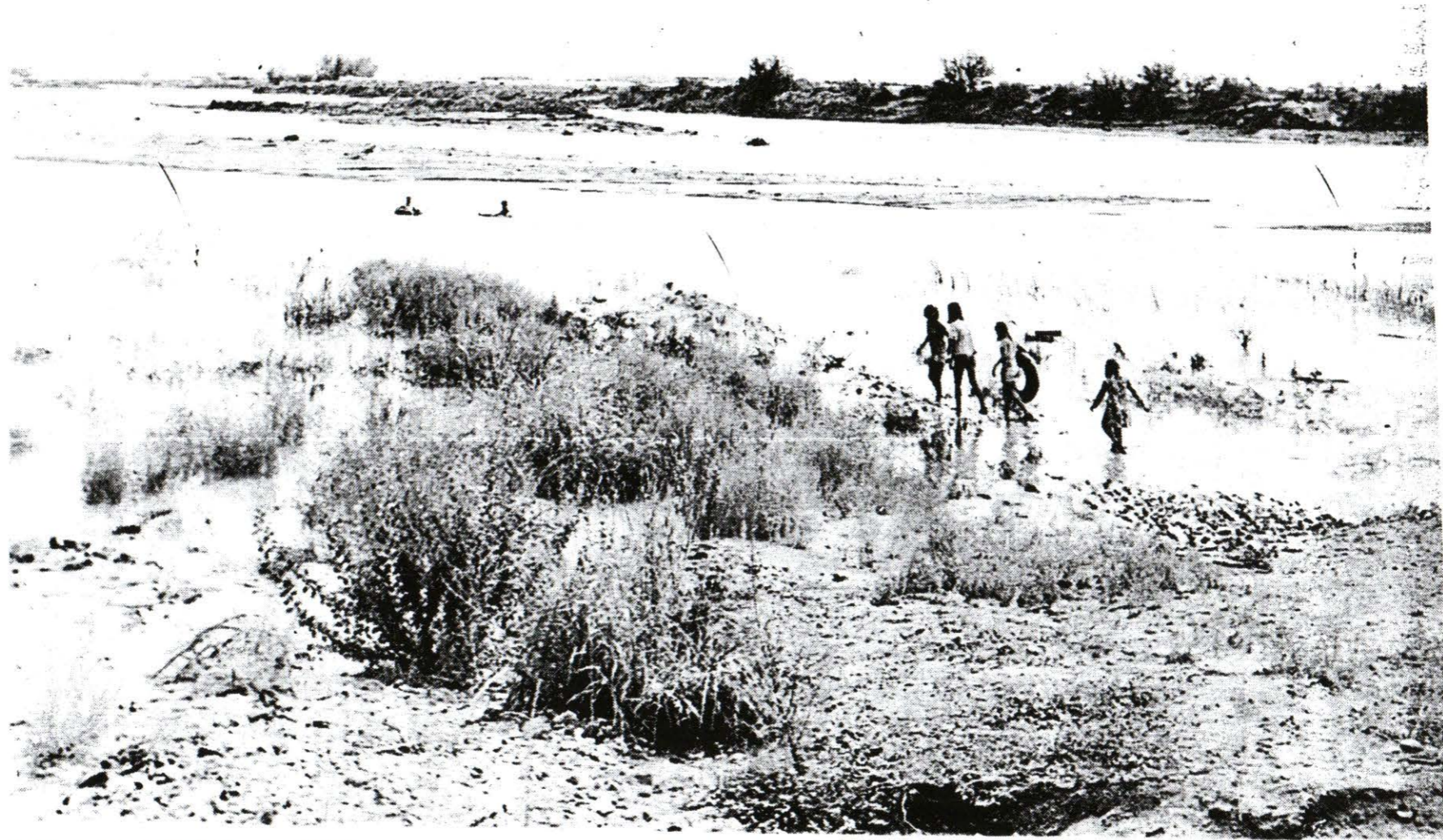
ROAD TO NOWHERE, looking east on Olive Avenue just outside of Sun City limits. Portion of pavement in foreground has been undercut by heavy flow of usually dry New River, leaving extreme danger of cave-in from weight

of autos. Washouts of this crossing and one at Peoria Avenue left Grand Avenue bridge only access route to metropolitan Phoenix area.

(News-Sun Staff Photo)



HERE WE GO AGAIN – Yes, that's Peoria Avenue at the New River Crossing. Record and Citizen photographer, Loyd Reckner took this picture Friday morning on the down river side. A proposed bridge will make all this a thing of the past, they tell us.



RARE EVENT for kids of Mabletown, just east of Grand Avenue's New River Bridge, is participating in water sports in usually dry river. Avoiding main channel,

where swift current carried water past Sun City's eastern edge, children take to inner tubes Sunday for relaxed floating in river's calmer recesses.

(News-Sun Staff Photo)



STILL VISIBLE over weekend was this car, swept from Olive Avenue crossing of New River adjacent to Sun City by torrents of water cascading down usually dry river bed. Driver apparently abandoned vehicle and waded to safety, but similar case at same crossing resulted in

suspected drowning. Anthony Leva of Los Angeles and vehicle he was driving are still sought downstream from Olive Avenue; sheriff's deputies believe both may have disappeared into deep pocket created by sand-gravel operations. (News-Sun Staff Photo)

Storm Kayos SC Power

Last weekend's storm which dumped more than four inches of water on Sun City-Youngtown in 2½ days created the biggest mass outage of electricity in the area's history and apparently took the life of one motorist.

Ted Dando, Arizona Public Service public relations official, said the trouble, which left about 2,000 APS customers north of Grand Avenue without electricity, started about 4:30 p.m. Saturday.

Underground transformers serving the area

were flooded, he said, and three 12,000-volt feeder lines were knocked out of service.

"We arrested the situation as soon as the water got below the level of the transformers so we could pump them out," Dando reported. "Outages lasted 1½ to 3 hours for the majority, but some areas were out until 3 a.m. Sunday."

Principal area in the latter group was Tropicana Circle. Those which received quickest restoration of power chiefly were homes in the Del Webb

Boulevard and 103rd Avenue area.

Dando said APS assembled a force of about 50 workers to restore power. From his firm's standpoint, the storm was the worst ever to hit the Sun City area.

Believed to be a drowning victim was Anthony Leva of Los Angeles, whose car was swept from Olive Avenue when he tried to ford New River immediately east of Sun City. Sheriff's deputies reported the search for his body was still going on yesterday.

A sheriff's deputy said a

16-year-old boy escaped from Leva's car as it was washed away. The boy said Leva could not swim.

Deputies suspect the missing car and driver may be lodged underwater in a sand and gravel pit in New River. Some pits are estimated to be 70 feet deep.

The torrent of water rushing down New River swept out more than 100 feet of the Olive Avenue roadbed and left low but treacherous cliffs overhanging the river. Extensive repairs will be

(Continued on Page 2)

Storm...

(Continued from Page 1)

needed to make Olive usable for motorists.

The water was judged by sheriff's deputies to be about 20 feet deep and moving at a speed from 30-40 miles an hour.

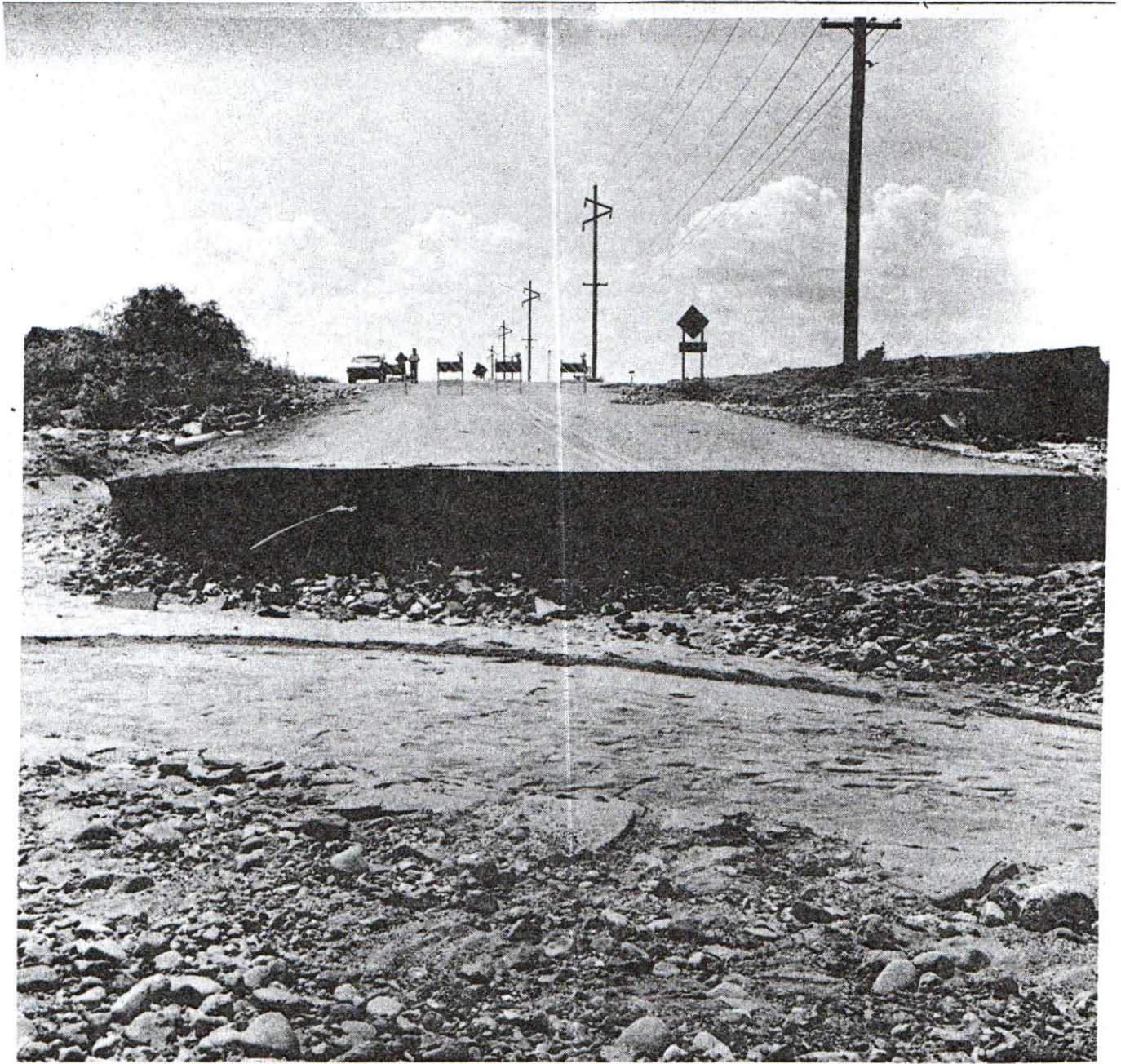
Although little damage was reported to Sun City-Youngtown property, the heavy rains made rivers out of several streets in the south section and motorists had to proceed with extreme caution.

Weather officials reported that more rain has fallen so far this month than has in any September in the last 30 years.



BEFORE ROAD WASHED AWAY, unidentified motorist decides to ignore warning signs and defy angry New River as it gushes over Olive Avenue following last week's heavy

rains. Force of downstream current inundated lower section of road, producing miniature waterfall with frothy swirl of water at base. (News-Sun Staff Photo)

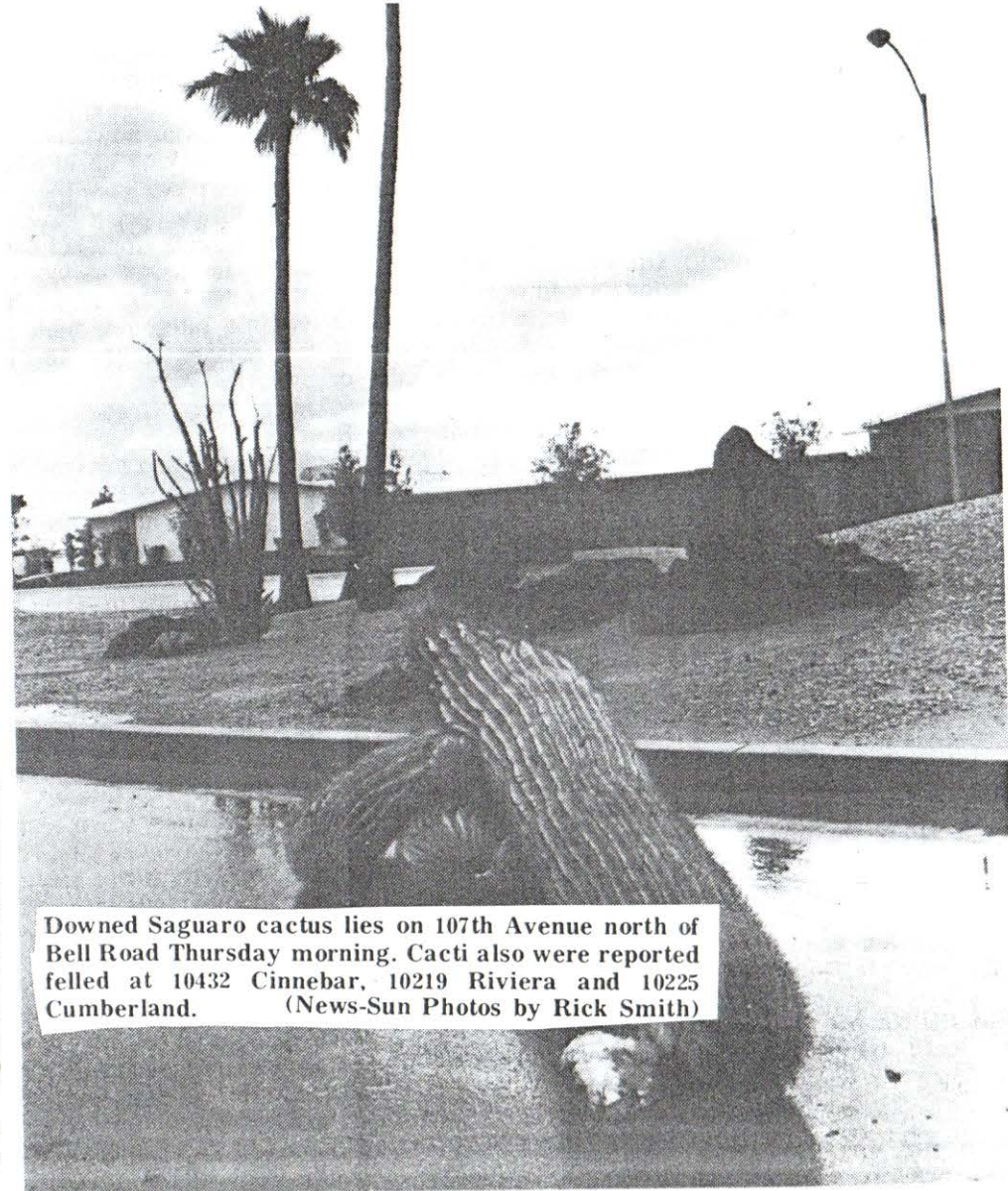


THIS WAS SCENE ON MONDAY—NO ROAD, as continual pounding of New River current washed out 300-foot section of Olive Avenue where auto in left photo was inching along only few days earlier. Looking east on Olive, dropoff measures nearly seven feet, making it extremely hazardous for any motorists. (News-Sun Staff Photo)

...as Spring pours blessings on Valley of Sun



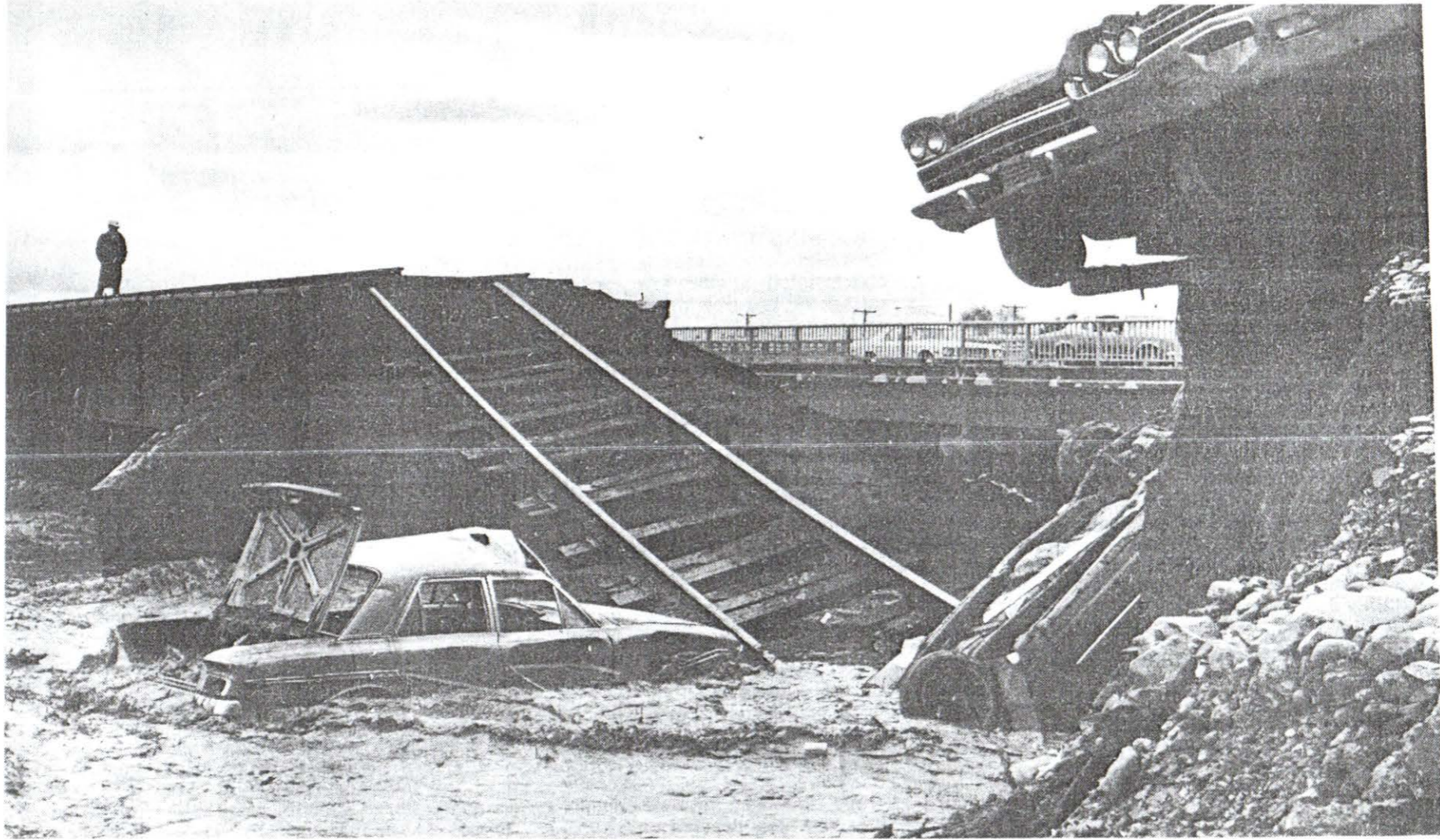
See what happens when you leave gate open? Water from Agua Fria River streams through Milwaukee Brewers training camp site in riverbottom west of Sun City Thursday morning.



Downed Saguaro cactus lies on 107th Avenue north of Bell Road Thursday morning. Cacti also were reported felled at 10432 Cinnebar, 10219 Riviera and 10225 Cumberland. (News-Sun Photos by Rick Smith)



Bogged down, Del E. Webb construction equipment stands in huge puddle of water near 99th Avenue just north of Santa Fe Drive as construction workers wait for weather to clear before resuming work.



Bridge fill

After futile efforts to save railroad bridge over New River, Santa Fe railroad workers cut loose collapsing section. Turbulent waters started eroding bridge's west abutment early Thursday; efforts to shore bridge

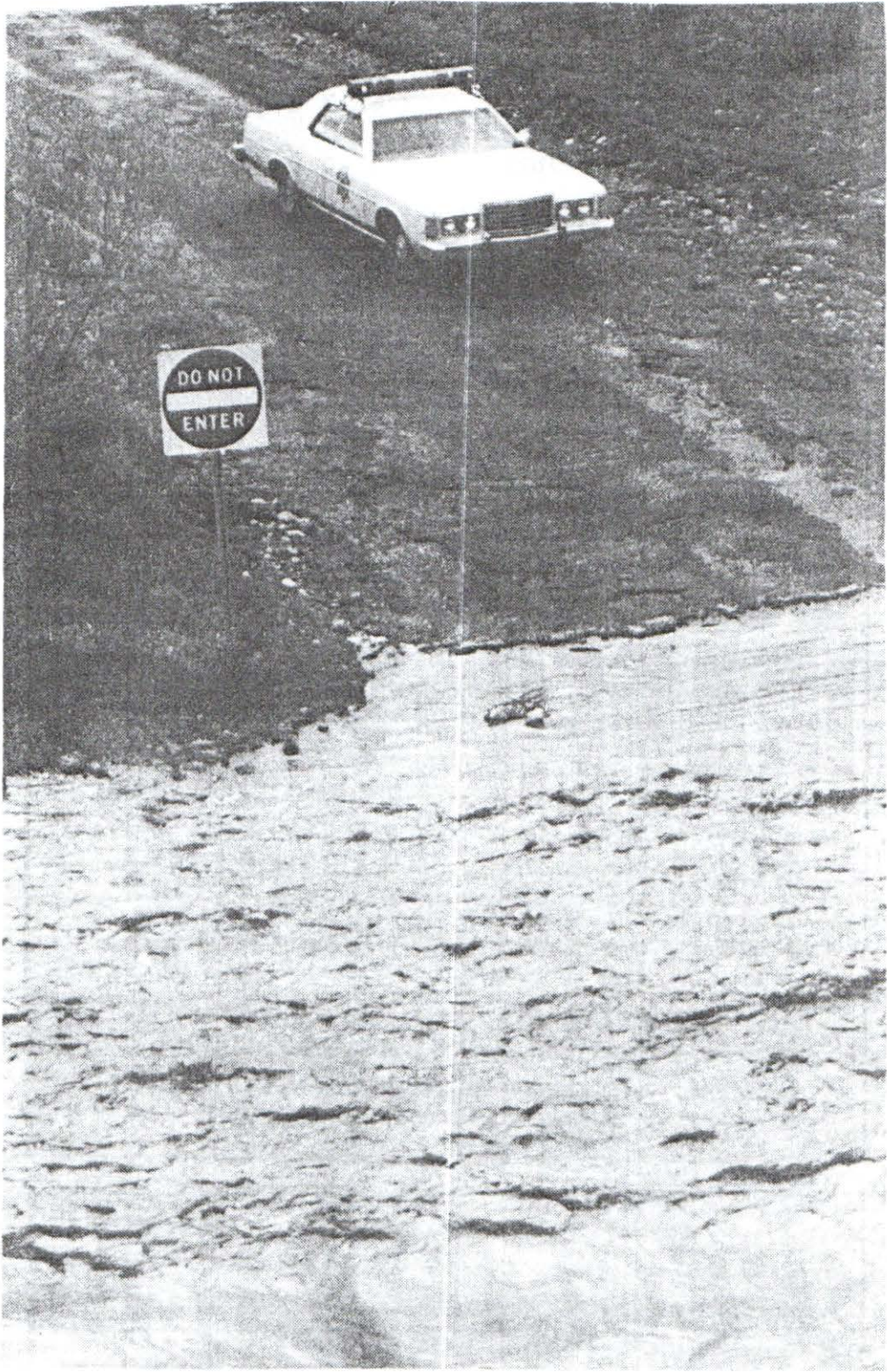
with junk cars failed and structure was sacrificed. Crews are continuing round-the-clock efforts to fill gapped section and reopen rail line. Heavy equipment has slowed traffic on Grand Avenue.

(News-Sun Photo by Elliott Freireich)

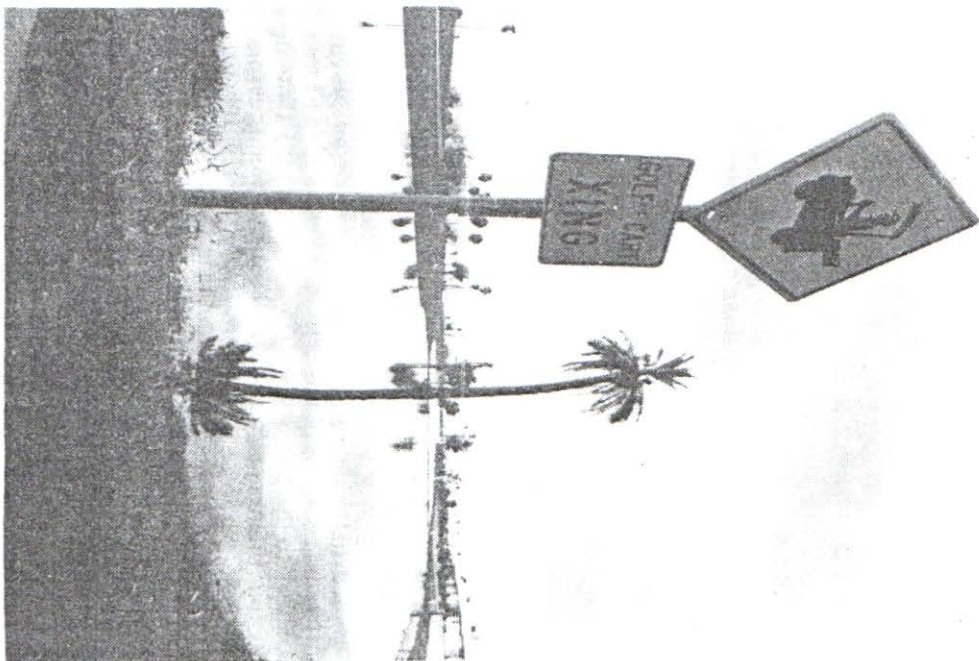


Del E. Webb Development Co. water pump removed 6000 gallons per minute from Viewpoint Lake at 103rd and Thunderbird Thursday afternoon. Lake was in danger of overflowing, so this effort was launched in order to drain water out toward New River.

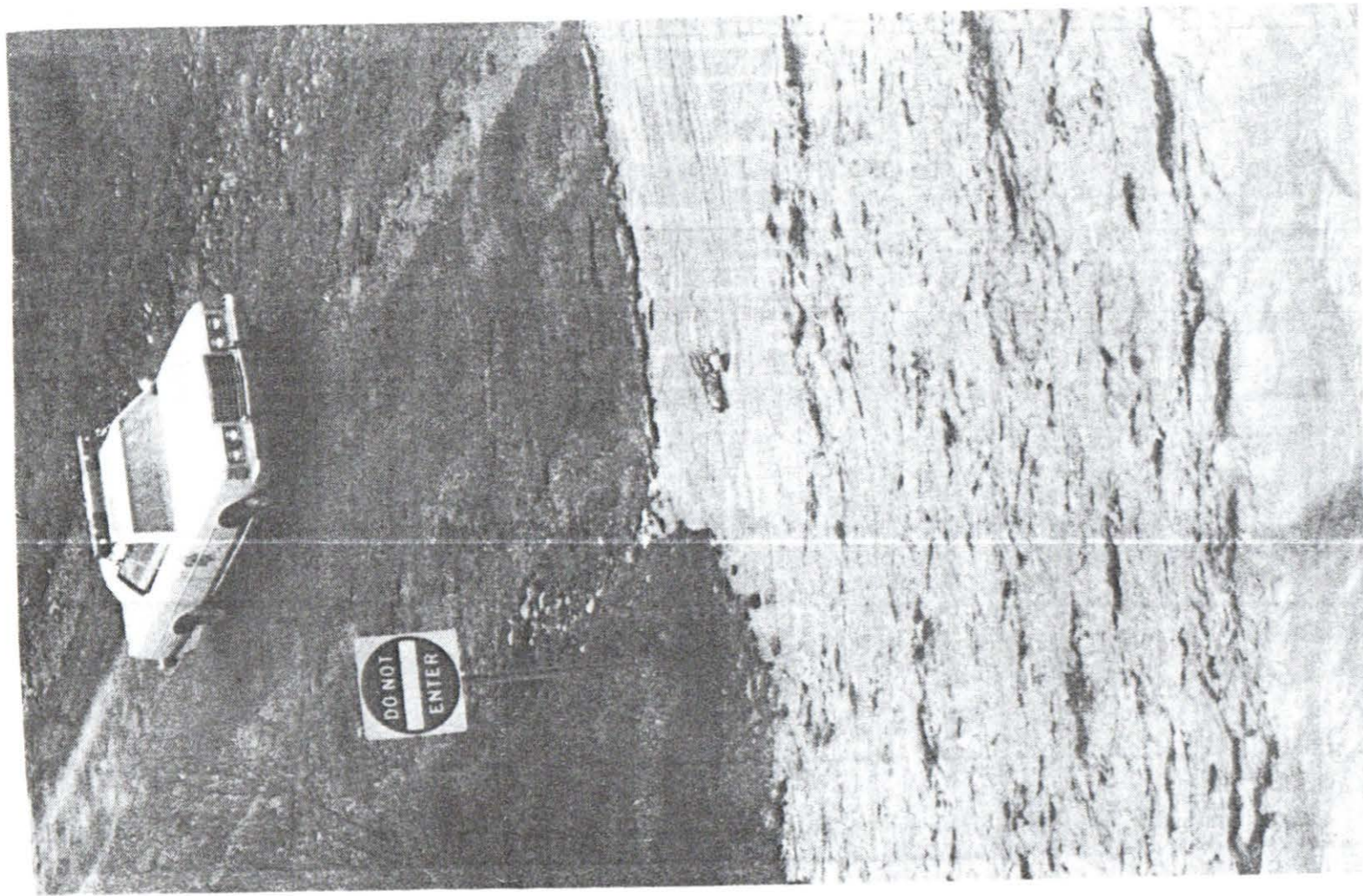
Water, water everywhere...



Local waterfowl should take heed of this sign at edge of Agua Fria River. Just in case any waterborne creatures cannot read, El Mirage's local constabulary is on hand to prevent their unauthorized entrance to dry land.



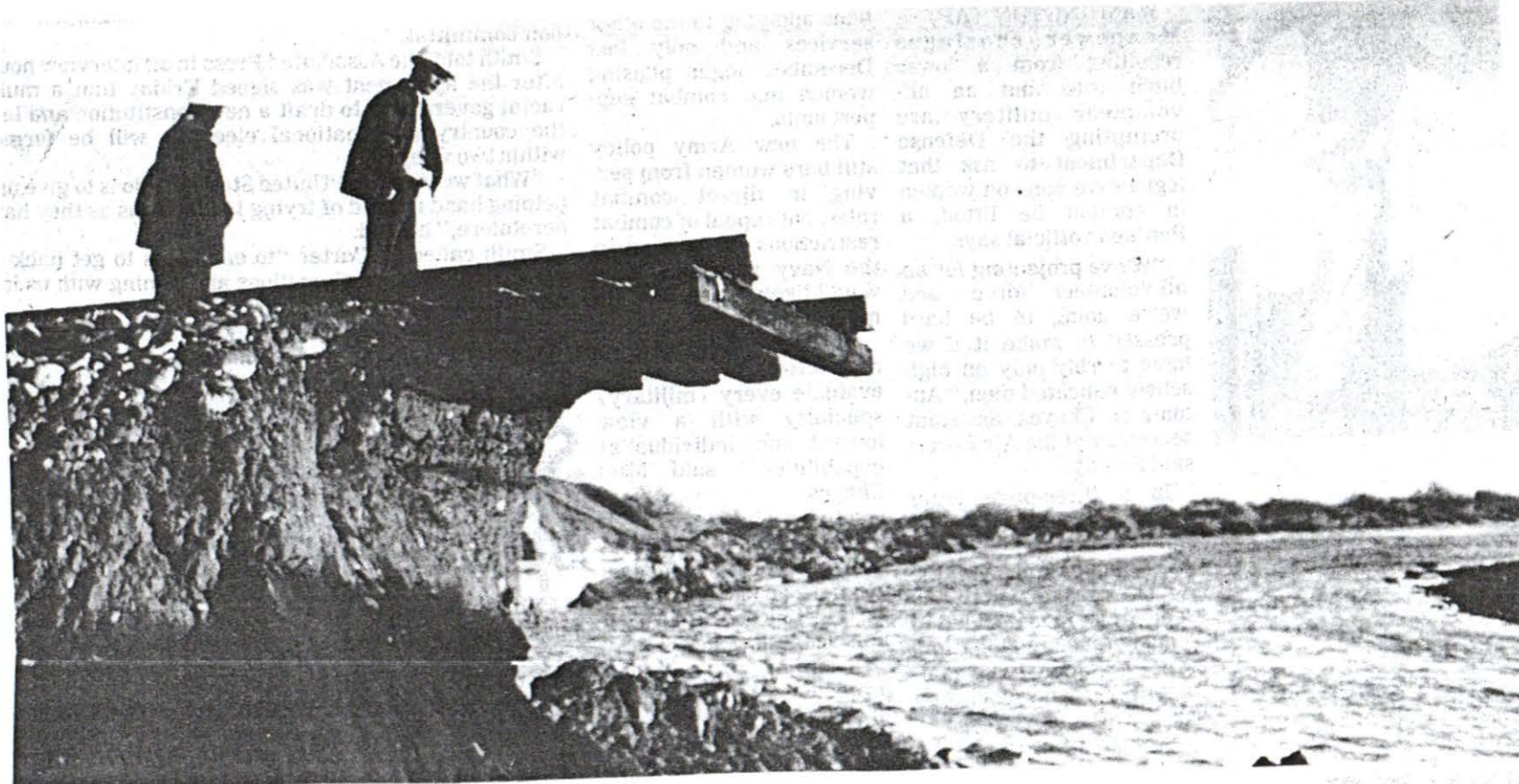
Willowbrook Golf Course seems to have developed some additional water hazards following rainstorm Wednesday night. Perhaps golf cart crossing sign should read "row-boat crossing."



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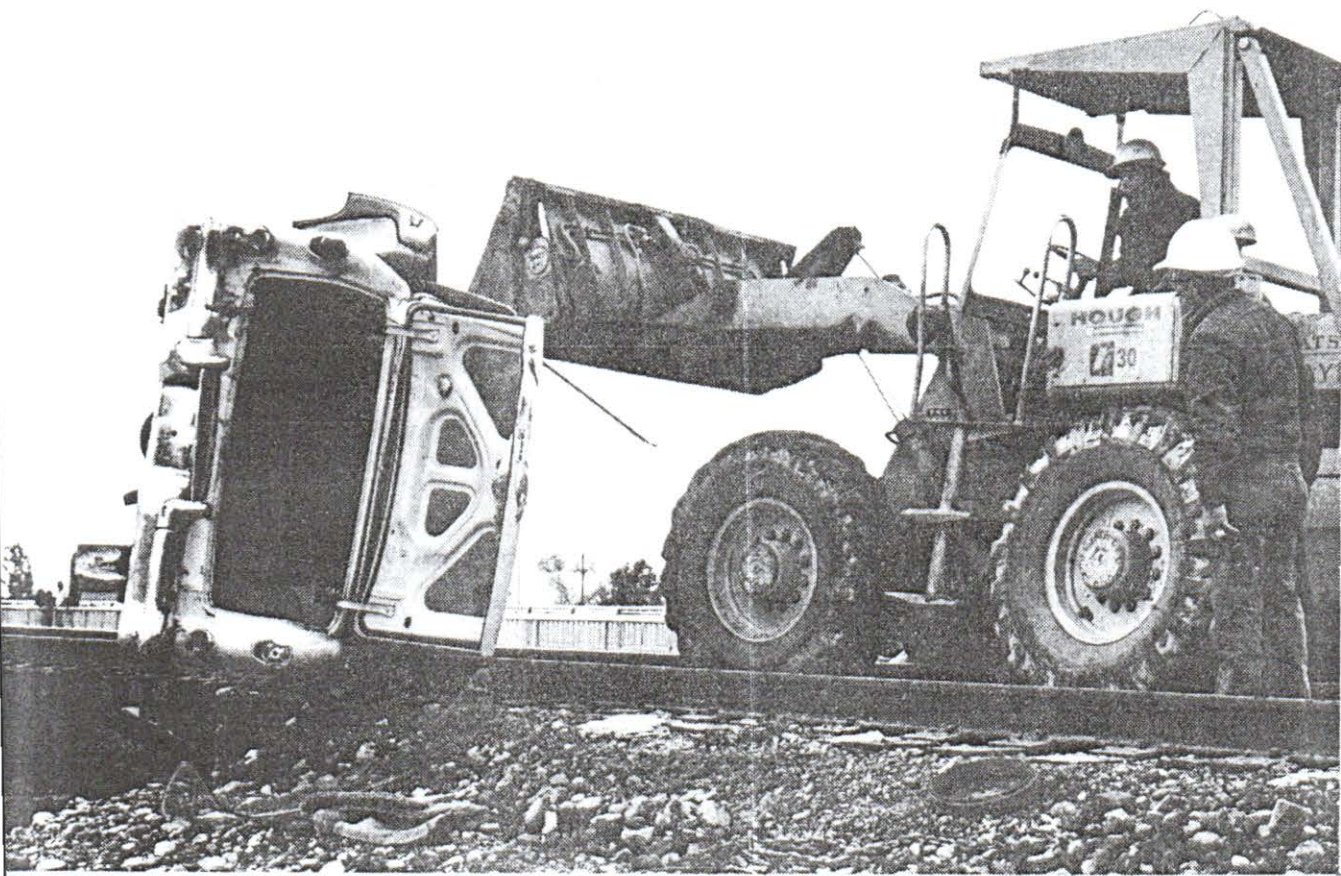
Washout fouls Santa Fe line

**Junk cars find
final use as fill
for eroded roadbed**

ABOVE:
Turgid New River, looking like real river, flows swiftly through gap created when workmen cut Santa Fe track which had been threatening to collapse into vehicle traffic bridge.
(News-Sun Photos by Jim Painter and Elliott Freireich)



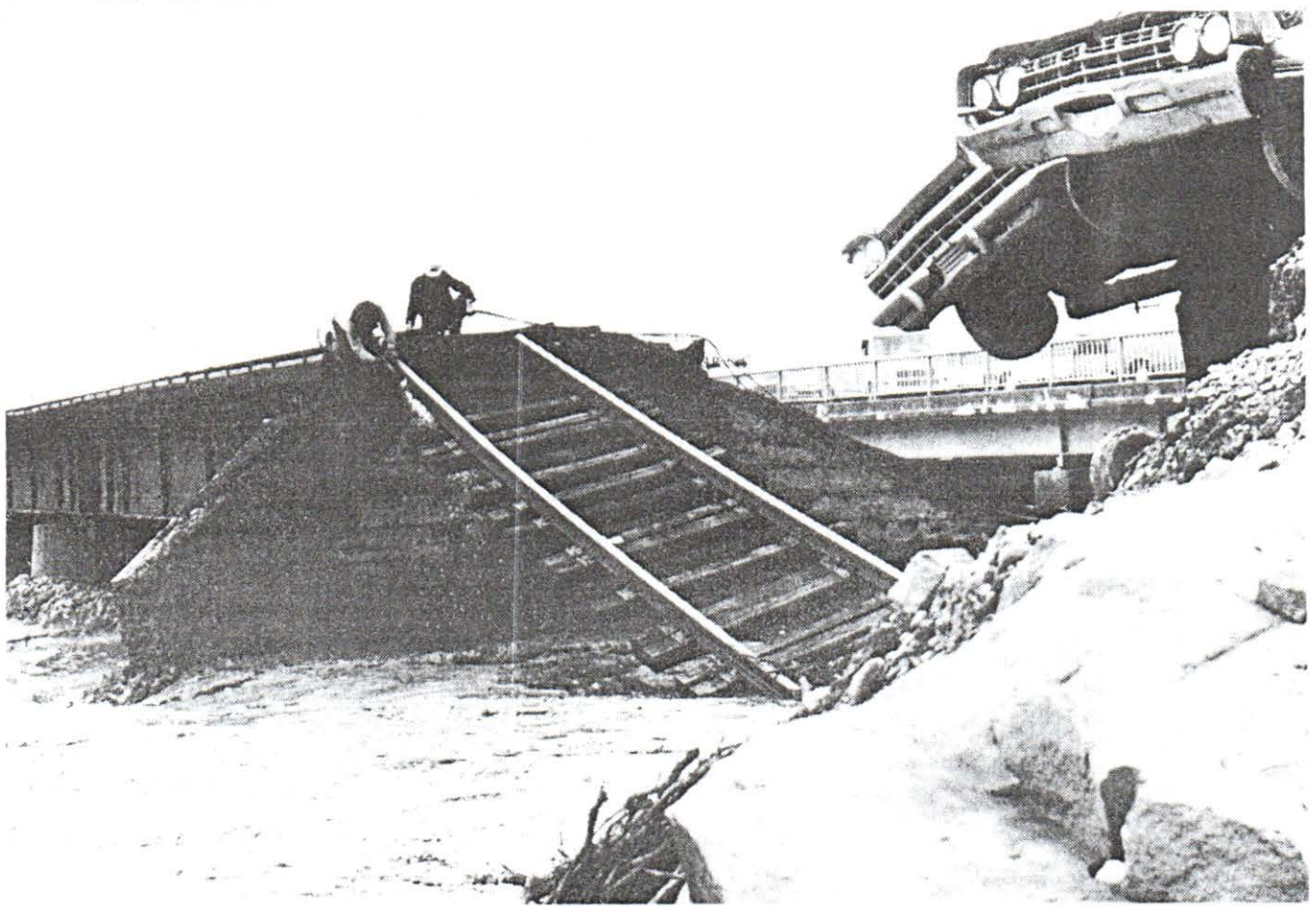
No, it's not tragic accident; cars were pushed into gap in Santa Fe tracks on purpose, to serve as fill. Many people who saw cars while driving past on vehicle bridge called Sheriff's Department to report "flood victims" floating down river.



Heavy machinery scooped, pushed and turned cars over on way to tumble over edge of track. After cars were in place, crews dumped gravel in to complete fill and provide new base for roadbed.



Fast-moving water eroded earth under trestle until by Thursday before noon it was evident something would have to be done. Railroad construction crew, at right, ponders action.



Workmen sever ties to let sagging track fall into water. First attempts at filling gap with cars failed when they floated away instead of sinking. Later, when track was

cut, about 3 p.m., crews were able to embed cars in rapidly growing channel.



Baseball Building Flooded But Game On!

A building housing equipment of the Milwaukee Brewer baseball team collapsed under the force of water from the rising Agua Fria River Monday. The structure is on the lower field of Sun City Stadium at 111th Avenue and

the river. Despite the flooding, the Brewers are expected to be able to open their spring-training season against the Chicago Cubs at 1 p.m. Thursday. The river rose after water was released from Lake Pleasant.

(Staff Photo by Renata Golden)

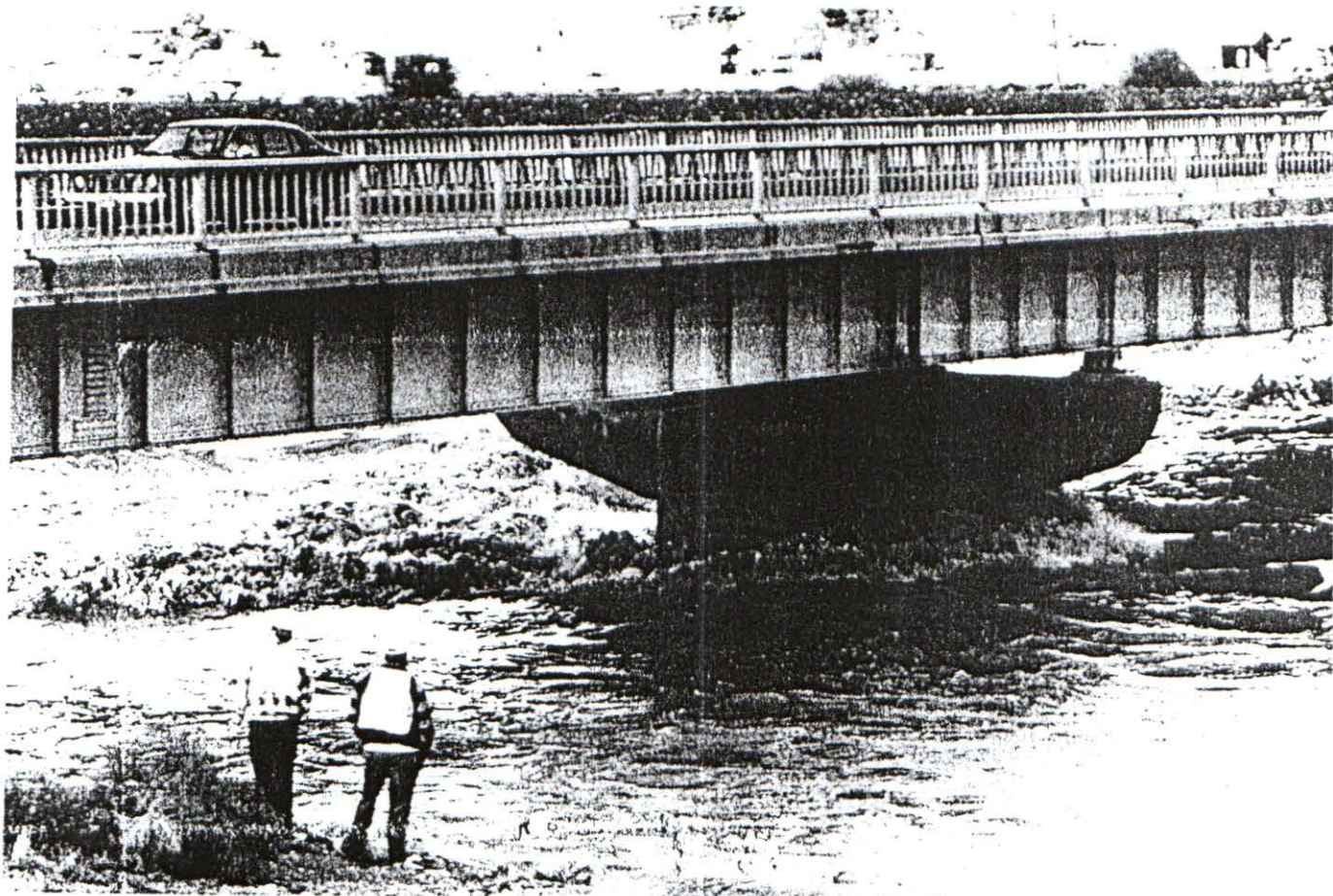
8—March 8, 1978—SUN CITY CITIZEN



Angry New River Disables RR Bridge

The rain-swollen New River near Sun City and Youngtown Thursday undermined the Santa Fe Railroad Bridge which runs parallel with the Grand Avenue Bridge. As result, Santa Fe rebuilt the bridge and hauled in boulders, dirt and old wrecked automobiles to

support the structure and provide riprap to blunt the force of the water. By the weekend, however, trains were using the bridge and the New River had receded. Work on the bridge caused traffic headed for Sun City to be slowed. (Staff Photo by Bob Kelly)



Highway engineers check Grand bridge early today.

(News-Sun Photo by Charley Ritter)

Flooding forces 1,000 from homes in SC-Y area

By RICHARD MOORE
Staff Writer

As many as 1,000 persons were evacuated from their homes Tuesday night after another storm dumped as much as two inches of rain on the already drenched communities surrounding Sun City.

Only Grand and Glendale Avenue bridges remain open across the Agua Fria and New River. The Indian School Road bridge over the Agua Fria was closed again shortly before 10 a.m. today and officials were not certain when it would reopen.

About 600 persons were forced to flee their homes along the New River east of Sun City at 9 p.m. Tuesday. Civil Defense workers were alerted to the rapidly rising river which resulted from excessive run-off north and west of Phoenix.

CAPT. ROY FOLTZ, Peoria Police Department, said all personnel were called back to work shortly after 8 p.m. to assist in the evacuation of residents in low-lying areas along the river. Most of the 300 families in Sun Air Estates at 96th and Peoria Avenue left immediately after police warned them of the

potential flood danger.

Residents in the 9200 and 9300 block of West Mobile Drive, three blocks southeast of Sun City, were also advised to leave their homes after the New River rose nearly 2½ feet within a two-hour period.

"Most of the evacuees spent the night in the Peoria High School cafeteria and gym," Captain Foltz said. "It wasn't nearly as bad as we first expected and everyone returned home by 6 a.m. today."

HERB MATHIS, high school principal, said some Red Cross volunteers remained at the school should another evacuation become necessary.

Meanwhile, as many as 350 residents in El Mirage spent another restless night in or near the town's elementary school after the water release at Lake Pleasant's Waddell Dam was increased to 66,000 cfs.

"Many people just spent the night in their cars or campers outside the school," said Walter Jones, Red Cross volunteer at the El Mirage school. "Many of those who came here last night went home by 8 a.m."

JONES SAID that volunteers have

been working around the clock to assist families flooded from their homes.

"We've been going for 108 hours straight and will probably have to continue at this pace until we know it's safe for everybody to go home," he said.

Officer Harry Blazer, El Mirage Police Department, said there was some structural damage to several homes along the Agua Fria River last night, but that damage was not as severe as first expected.

"WE HAVE quite a bit of road damage around town," Officer Blazer said. "It's almost impossible to drive down River Road or sections of Olive Avenue, but we haven't closed any roads."

Civil Defense officials were worried that further evacuations in Sun City and Youngtown would become necessary.

Matt Ostrander, assistant manager of Sambo's Restaurant on Grand Avenue near the Agua Fria, said authorities warned them about the possibility of evacuating last night.

(Continued on 2A)

OVER

Flood...

1-20-80

(Continued from Page 1)

"TWO CIVIL defense workers told us to get out our ladders and be prepared to climb onto the roof," he said. "It didn't get as bad as they thought."

Residents in two Sun City area trailer courts also were asked to leave their homes last night as a precaution. High waters threatened to isolate the Apollo and Palo Verde Trailer Parks near 99th Street and Grand Avenue, said Deputy George McCants, Maricopa County sheriff's department.

"We had deputies at both trailer parks helping residents get to the evacuation center in Peoria," he said. "Our main concern, though, was further downstream at Avondale where most of our personnel worked through the night to help get those people to high ground."

ARIZONA PUBLIC Service reported a power outage early Wednesday affecting Youngtown and some areas in Sun City.

Martha McKinley, APS public relations spokesman, said that wires were knocked down at Cactus Road in the Agua Fria, causing the outage.

"Most of the power was restored by 8 a.m.," she said. "Power went out at 7:09 a.m. in Youngtown and in the Sun City area from Dysart Road to 108th Drive and between Desert Cove and Waikiki."

Miss McKinley said APS was able to reroute power temporarily and that major repairs will be completed when flood water

subside. She said APS' major concern is keeping the sectionalized circuits from being overloaded, which would cause another outage.

A SPOKESMAN for the Maricopa County Water District said releases from Lake Pleasant Tuesday night became necessary after the watershed neared capacity.

"We started increasing the flow about 9 p.m. and reduced it down to 46,200 cfs by 8 a.m.," said Florence Smith. "It's anybody's guess what's going to happen next."

The maximum acreage of water per foot that Lake Pleasant can hold is 157,000. The current level is 147,550 acre feet, Mrs. Smith said.

"If we have another storm in the next few days like the one that hit yesterday, it could be a repeat of everything," she said.

THE NATIONAL Weather Service is forecasting some showers late Wednesday with the possibility of another storm saturating the state Friday.

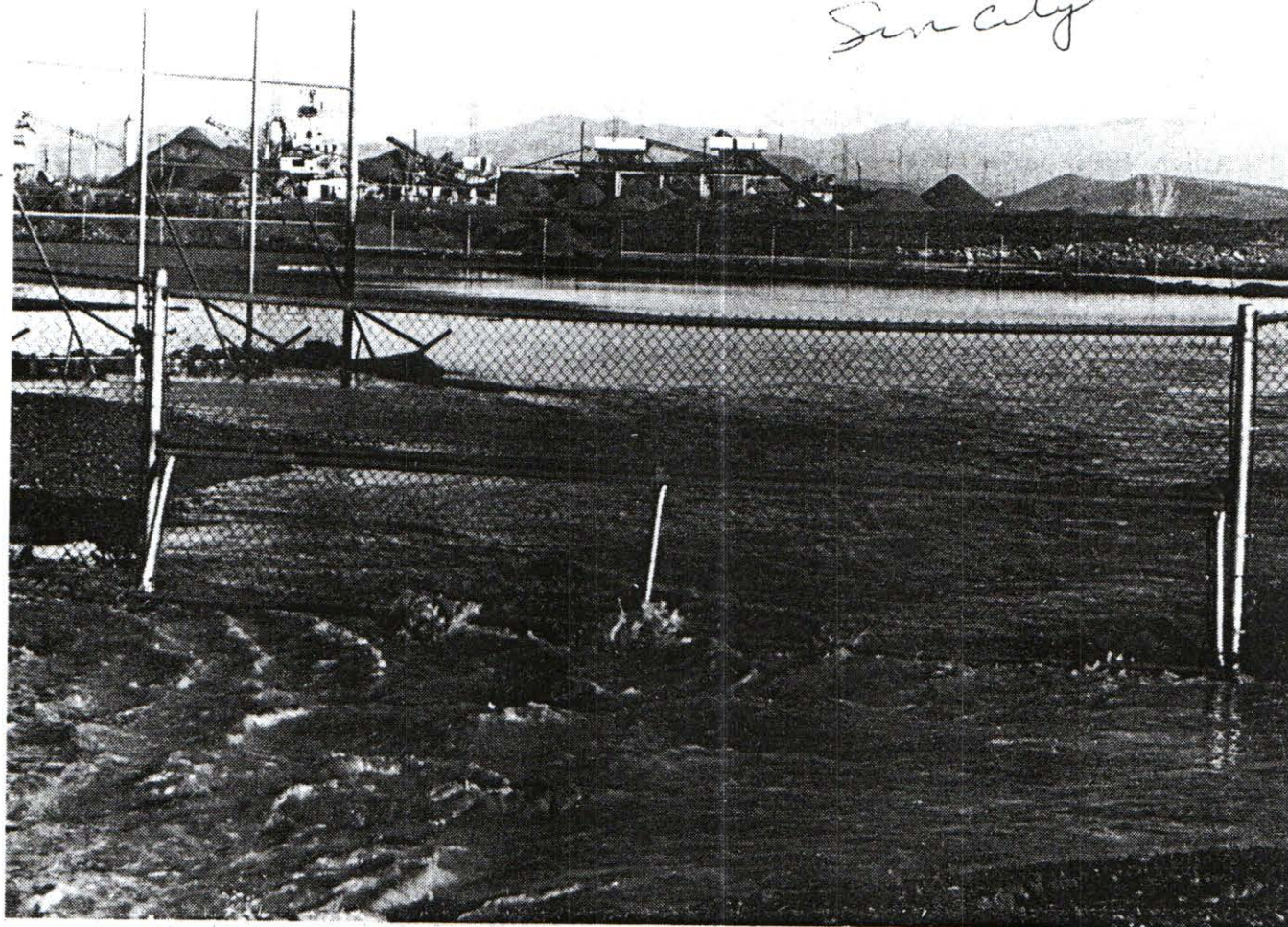
"Things look pretty good right now," said Claire Jensen, National Weather Service chief forecaster. "But in 48 hours, we could have another heavy storm."

"We're watching the activity about 500 miles off the California coast which should move into western Arizona by late Friday. Things could become a little hectic again by then."

V.F. SUNCITY II (1978)

News Sun
Friday Jan 20-78

Sun city



Rains came to Sun City—in floods

Milwaukee Brewers practice field, west of Sun City Stadium, is awash from this week's continual rains. It will take a lot of Arizona sunshine to dry out the field in

time for arrival of the Brewers for spring practice in about five weeks.

(News-Sun photo by Jim Painter)



Waterfall flows at intersection of normally dry New River and 83rd Ave., just north of Bell Road. Thunderbird Blvd. is closed at New River but 99th Ave., is

open. Northern Ave., is closed at New River and Olive Ave., at Agua Fria.

(News-Sun photo by Rick Smith)

BRIDGES THREATENED

El Mirage residents prepare to evacuate

Rain-swollen waters in the New River and Agua Fria River threatened bridge crossings near Sun City this morning as some El Mirage residents prepared to evacuate their homes because of high waters.

Sun City Sheriff's Possemen spent a busy night Wednesday ferrying stranded motorists home.

The railroad bridge over New River east of Sun City is being eroded rapidly and railroad workers were shoring both ends of the bridge with junk automobiles shortly before noon, Peoria police reported.

Police said if the trestle should collapse it could topple downstream and damage the Grand Avenue bridge.

THAT BRIDGE is still bearing normal motor traffic, they said.

But police warned that both the Peoria Avenue and the 99th and Olive Avenue bridges are ready to collapse and have been cordoned off.

The Department of Public Safety reported that the Bell Road-New River bridge is stable.

Allegra Saunders, El Mirage town clerk, said the southern area of El Mirage was in three feet of

water at 11 a.m. today. All homes on the river side of B Street were warned about possible evacuation and many already had left, she said.

Several hundred people live in the evacuation area. The town hall, senior citizen's center and schools are evacuation centers and Mrs. Saunders said the town is preparing for any emergency.

THIS MORNING, many residents had left their homes in their cars and were waiting and watching nearby, she said. Sunnysvale, near El Mirage, also had been alerted for possible evacuation.

Mrs. Saunders said a considerable volume of water from McMicken Dam was headed toward town this morning.

She said town officials had been alerted to prepare for a two-foot rise in water level in El Mirage about 3 or 4 p.m. today but areas other than the evacuation area appeared to be in no danger.

She said the fire and police departments are watching senior citizens' homes throughout the area and are on hand to help. "Things are pretty bad here."

LUKE AIR FORCE Base officials took a helicopter tour over the earthen flood control dam about 7:30 a.m. today, and Luke Air Force information office Paul Sewell said the area behind the dam is full.

Water is flowing from two spillways in the dam, one feeding into the Agua Fria River.

Water is running through the spillways at about 7,000 cubic feet per second, county civil defense officials said about 11 a.m., and that volume could increase substantially with more rain.

THE LUKE spokesman said no flood contingency plans at the air base have been put into effect, although the base lies in a low spot in the flood plain below McMicken.

Jim White, commander of the Sun City Posse, said five patrol cars spent a good part of the night helping motorists whose cars had stalled in flooded intersections.

Several residents were taken home from Lakeview Center. Motorists abandoned their cars in streets after they stalled, White said, and the possemen spent a good deal of time calling towing services to help residents.

THE 99TH-UNION Hills and 103rd-Mountain View intersections created particular problems, with Sun City Rural-Metro firemen pulling several cars out of the Mountain View intersection. They said water south on Mountain View was running more than a foot deep in places.



Driver trapped in car rescued from Agua Fria

Rescuers lowered themselves from ropes off the Agua Fria-Grand Avenue bridge this morning to save a man who had been trapped for three hours in a submerged vehicle.

The trapped man, Patrick McMichael of Phoenix, had less than eight inches of air left to breathe when two members of an Avondale mountain rescue unit succeeded in reaching the car with ropes.

Youngtown police, who assisted on the scene, said rescuers were able to open a door and release McMichael before the water completely covered his car.

Police said McMichael had attempted to cross the Agua Fria below the bridge around 5:30 a.m. en route to work at Arizona Sand and Rock when his car was rolled downstream.

Sheriff's deputies, Surprise police and Sun City Rural Metro firemen also assisted.

~~estimated time the city created the~~
~~may lose about \$10 million~~

NEWS SUN

Serving America's Pioneer Retirement Communities Since 1957

SUN CITY, ARIZONA

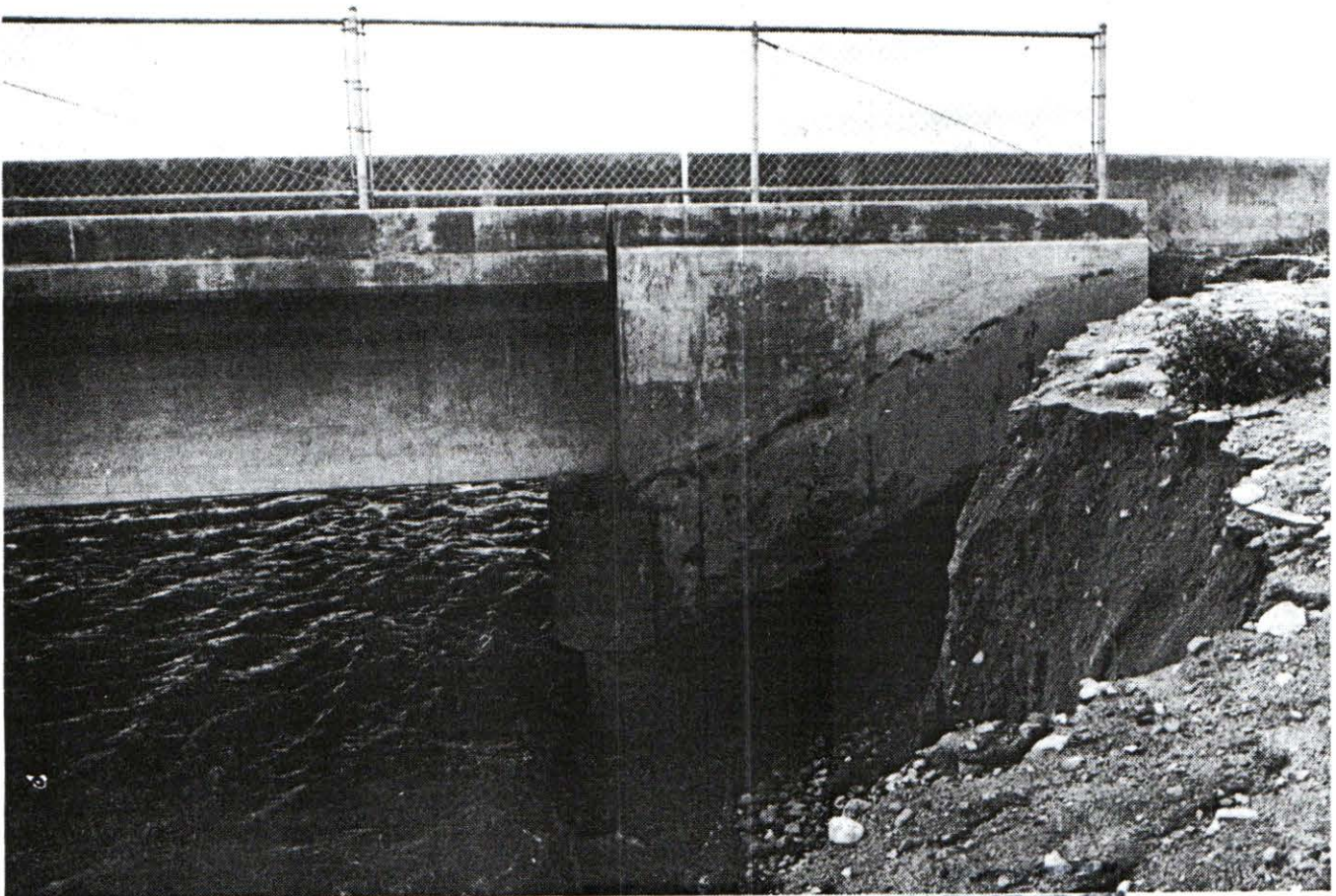
Thursday, March 2, 1978

Late
stocks

15¢

16 Pages

Vol. XXI, No. 149



Bridge at 99th Avenue and Olive, completed in 1976, was threatened today when west end of bank began washing out. County Highway Department representative said bridge probably would be all right,

held in place by wing bolts at west end, as long as traffic is kept off; bridge was closed.

(News-Sun Photo)

EVER

Traffic jams slow area travel

PHOENIX, Ariz. (AP) — Maricopa County residents faced massive traffic jams today like that of Tuesday which turned bridge approach roads into temporary parking lots as only crossings remained open over the raging Salt River.

At the same time hundreds of residents remained away from their homes after evacuations were ordered for areas north and west of Phoenix Tuesday night.

Flooding was reported along Oak Creek, north of Sedona. About 40 persons were evacuated from their homes along the creek, Coconino County sheriff's deputies said.

Maricopa County Civil Defense authorities ordered residents along New River and Agua Fria rivers northwest of Phoenix to leave their homes as the water began to rise rapidly. Many of the people had already left their homes from flooding last Friday.

About 700 persons fled their homes at El Mirage, Mayor John Garza said. In nearby Peoria, police said about 500 people left their homes.

Officials increased water flows from Waddell Dam on Lake Pleasant to 60,000 cubic feet per second by midnight.

Traffic was backed up for about 10 miles at one Salt River bridge crossing. One motorist said it took him five hours to go from downtown Phoenix to Tempe, normally a 20 minute trip.

"I've moved one block in three hours," said Vivian Vensel. "If I knew it was going to be this bad, I would have stayed at work and slept in the office."

"We go out and sit in their cars so they can go to the bathroom or use the phone," said Mike Anderson, an employee of a tavern. "If the traffic move, we move their cars for them."

Water releases on the Salt River dropped to 52,880 cfs Tuesday afternoon, down from a peak of 170,000 cfs on Saturday.

Salt River Project officials said storage space on the reservoirs northeast of Phoenix was continuing to grow.

Corrective measures may not be possible until the river recedes, said deputy state engineer, Owen Ford. He was unable to estimate when the bridge might re-open.

Gov. Bruce Babbitt said he had ordered border stations to reroute interstate truck traffic through Yuma.

Meantime, he said his office is studying the possibility of using a trans-river Southern Pacific train for commuting.

Reduction of traffic to

the absolute minimum is essential, he said, and another step toward that is increased carpooling and staggered work hours for those who have to cross the Salt.

"We've asked all major employers to stagger work hours to permit employees to come early and leave at times to avoid the rush hour," said Babbitt.

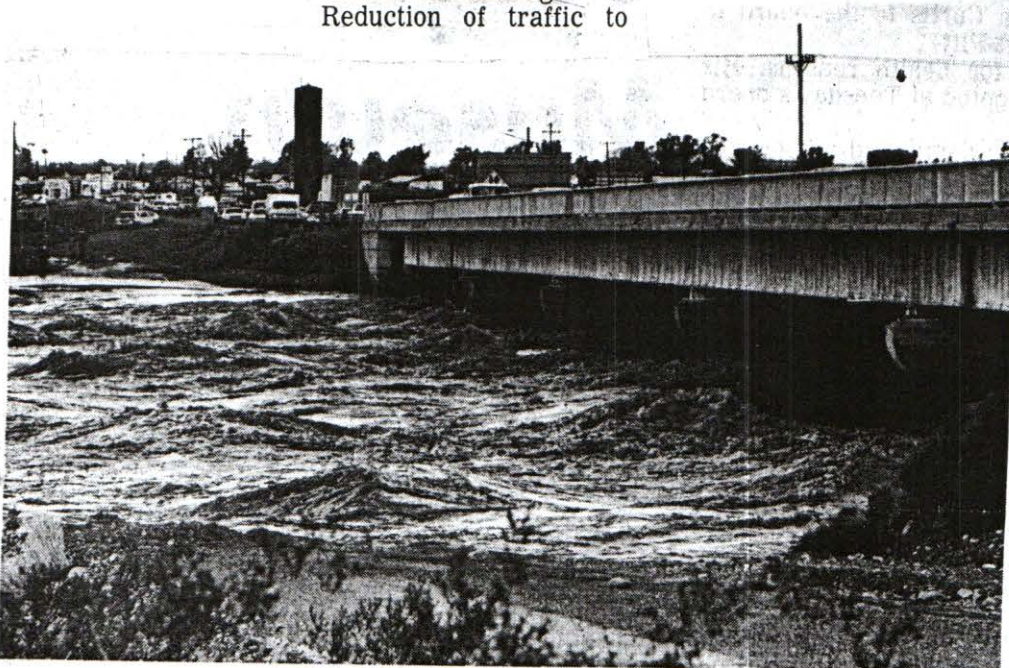
Charles Ott, head of the state Division of Emergency Services, gave an early estimate of damage in the three counties as the result of the heavy rains and releases

through the Salt River system.

He said damage was estimated at more than \$67 million dollars. He said the figures included \$13 million for damage to public facilities, including schools, airports and courts, roads. Damage to bridges was put at \$14 million, but Ott said the total for the two categories was probably closer to \$40 million.

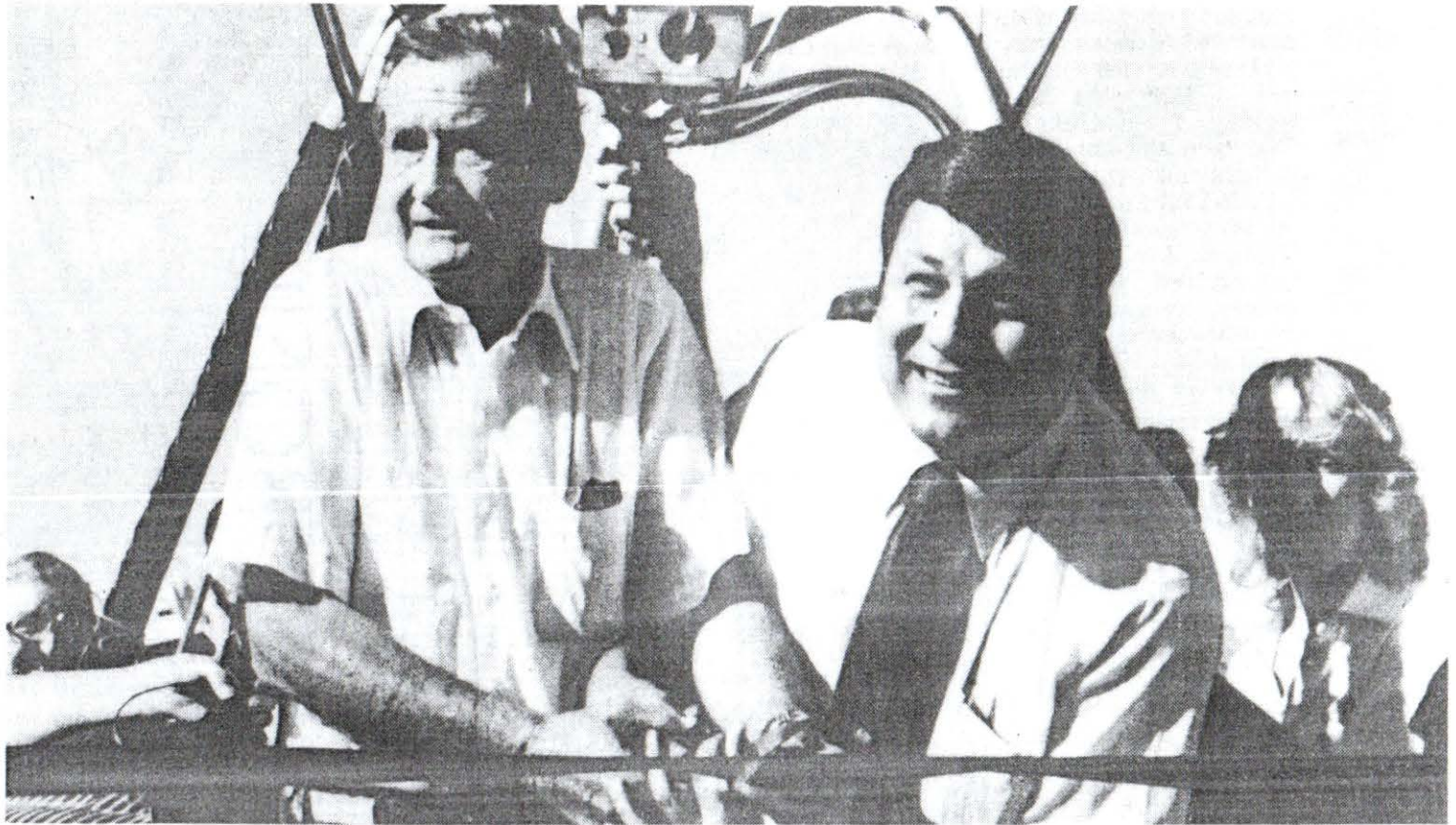
He said damage to homes was set at \$2.7 million, but could go as high as \$10 to \$15 million. Businesses losses were

tentatively put at \$15 million, but figures were not immediately available. He said agricultural losses were estimated at \$9.4 million.



A long line of slow moving traffic headed east on Grand Ave. crossed the rising floodwaters of the Agua Fria River early this morning.

(News-Sun photo by Charlie Ritter)



Bell bridge dedicated

Supervisors Hawley Atkinson, left; and Fred Koory Jr. prepare to cut ribbon dedicating Bell Road bridge over the Agua Fria River this morning. Opening of the vital link

between Sun City and Sun City West will restore all-weather traffic capability to the roadway which carries more than 12,000 vehicles per day. (News-Sun Photo by Jim Painter)

Dec. 9, 1981

Editorials

NEWS-SUN Thursday, December 10, 1981 A-4

Bridge to friendship

In February 1980, Sun City West found out what it means to be isolated. Heavy rains created a torrent of floodwater that swept down the Agua Fria River and slammed into the Bell Road bridge, causing the middle of the span to break and drop to the riverbed.

Although a detour road was built by the county soon, at the urging of Sun City West's residents, there was a period of extreme inconvenience.

Now, the county has completed and dedicated a replacement bridge, sturdily constructed to withstand 100-year floodwaters of 103,000 cubic feet per second (as compared to the 66,000 cfs peak in February 1980 that crashed into the old bridge), costing \$4 million and paid for by Maricopa County without federal, state or other contributions, a structure of permanence.

Two members of the Maricopa County Highway Commission, local residents Murray Karsten and Eldon Davidson, made the same, very special, point in their remarks during dedication ceremonies Tuesday.

This bridge, both stressed, can serve a greater purpose than simply as a more reliable connection between Sun City West and Sun City—and, of course, the rest of the Valley. It can become a symbol of a new relationship between the retirement communities.

Said Davidson: "It is my sincere hope that this beautiful

new bridge will not only solve some serious transportation problems but will be symbolic of the need for the residents of Sun City and Sun City West to tear down walls of misunderstanding and to emphasize the many things we have in common."

And Karsten: "Speaking as a Sun City resident, this span of concrete and steel can represent more than a bridge that crosses the riverbed at this point. It can also be used as a symbol in providing a bridge of friendship between Sun City, Sun City West and Youngtown, wherein these three communities will work together toward common goals and achieve higher objectives with their combined efforts."

These retirement tri-communities have much in common; the barriers that have been erected have been created in people's minds. What needs now to be created in people's minds is a new image of commonality, cooperation and sharing.

Karsten, borrowing from the Spanish, said he would like to refer to the bridge as "El Fuente de Amestad" or "The Bridge of Friendship."

There, Sun Citizens, Sun City Westers and Youngtowners, is a symbol to embrace, to demonstrate and to perpetuate. Let's start calling it Friendship Bridge—and make it truly that by building bridges of understanding.

TOTAL

NEWS-SUN TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1985

F5

Local meteorologists all wet about "monsoon season"

By ALFRED J. HASTINGS
Sun City

The following analysis which follows concerns the "monsoon season," and to me, the off-hand manner in which our local TV meteorologists describe such a weather phenomenon.

To acquaint a reader with its meaning, I refer to Webster's Dictionary, which defines a monsoon as: "a seasonal wind of the Indian Ocean and northern Asia, blowing from the southwest from April to October, and from the northeast during the rest of the year"; 2) "the season during which the wind blows from the southwest characterized by heavy rain"; 3) "rainy season."

Do note what is implicit in the definition, i.e., seasonal winds coupled with heavy rains, or —a rainy season.

In opposition to the definition are the comments of our local TV meteorologists that we are now in the latter stages of our "monsoon season." And they say this, in the face of a season already short about an inch of rain, along with no semblance whatsoever of heavy rains, or even that of a rainy season.

In addition, at the moment our typical rainfall pattern totals about 4 inches, and how they can equate this as being "heavy" or that of a "rainy season" is beyond me.

In referring further to my dictionary tells me that a meteorologist is "one versed in meteorology," and that meteorology is: "the science which treats of weather and climate."

In view of that, I suggest to our local TV meteorologists that if they studied a dictionary as closely as the study isobars, it might lead them to conclude that by identifying our current and past seasons as being monsoons, they are, in fact, perpetuating a misnomer.

Pursuing the misnomer premise, may I next suggest that our forecasters give thoughtful consideration to obtaining copies of the December 1984 issue of the National Geographic magazine, and read its lead article titled: "Monsoons." The article is a vividly written and gives a pictorial portrayal of the subject.

COMMENTARY

In the last paragraph on page 716, for example, they will find its author, Mr. Peter J. Vesilind, recounting that "... I had traveled four months through the length and breadth of the monsoon world—from Africa to north China, from the tropical coast of Australia to the lofty Himalayas of Nepal", but nowhere does he mention Arizona or the Southwest as being a part of the monsoon world.

If they choose to dismiss the author's article from the standpoint that he is a layman not versed in meteorology, then perhaps they should write to Mr. Julius Joseph, chief meteorologist Trivandrum, Kerala, India, and ask him for his definition of a monsoon?

If not so inclined, then I—having experienced a monsoon while on duty in Bombay, India, during 1943, with the (then) Army Air Corps—can personally attest to its force.

When I was caught outdoors when the clouds parted to release their heavy burdens of rain, it was forcefully brought home to me just what a monsoon is.

I was first battered about by the heavy winds, and then engulfed in torrents of rain which at times slashed at me horizontally, and then vertically. The rain completely soaked me, including my shoes, socks, rain gear, etc. I became waterlogged from the deluge and from sloshing through streets and walks that had become small rivers.

And when the rains ceased, what I had just gone through was a prelude to a "Turkish bath"—it was steamy with ultra-high humidity stoked by the sun as it broke through.

From what I have told you, it therefore pains me to listen to anyone of our local TV meteorologists report that we are going through another of our monsoon seasons.

The author is a frequent contributor to the "For you" section.

Dancing dust devils frequent hot spots

By DAN BURNETTE
Daily News-Sun staff

Contrary to popular belief, dust devils are not "baby tornadoes" that move to the Midwest and grow up along the way to wreak havoc on trailer parks.

Tornadoes and dust devils both involve gyrating columns of air and debris, but the similarities pretty much end there.

Tornadoes are rare in the Valley of the Sun, even during storms, but dust devils are a common sight during the 100-degree weather and full sunshine of the Valley.

Tornadoes and dust devils, besides

'Dust devils tend to dance from hot spot to hot spot, and when they run out of hot spots, they collapse.'

Chris Breckenridge
National Weather Service meteorologist

the obvious difference in the size of the funnels, also differ in their causes.

The column of air in a tornado is several hundred feet wide, spins at 200 to 300 mph and can travel hundreds of miles, according to the National Weather Service. A tornado

usually is part of a larger storm that includes heavy rain, thunder and lightning. A tornado forms when air temperatures are unstable and warm and moist air at low levels converges with cooler, drier air aloft. The force of a tornado can flatten buildings, drain ponds and lift cars, livestock

and people off the ground, usually to ill effect.

A dust devil is a much smaller column of air, only inches to several feet wide, that turns at 40 to 50 mph. A dust devil is created by differences in the rate that areas of the ground heat up under the glare of full sun, said Dennis Sturm, a forecaster with the National Weather Service in Phoenix. As spots on the ground heat at different rates, air from the hotter spots — usually, those that are the darkest and heat up quicker — begins rising as the slightly cooler,

See Dust swirls, A6

Dust swirls up to 50 mph

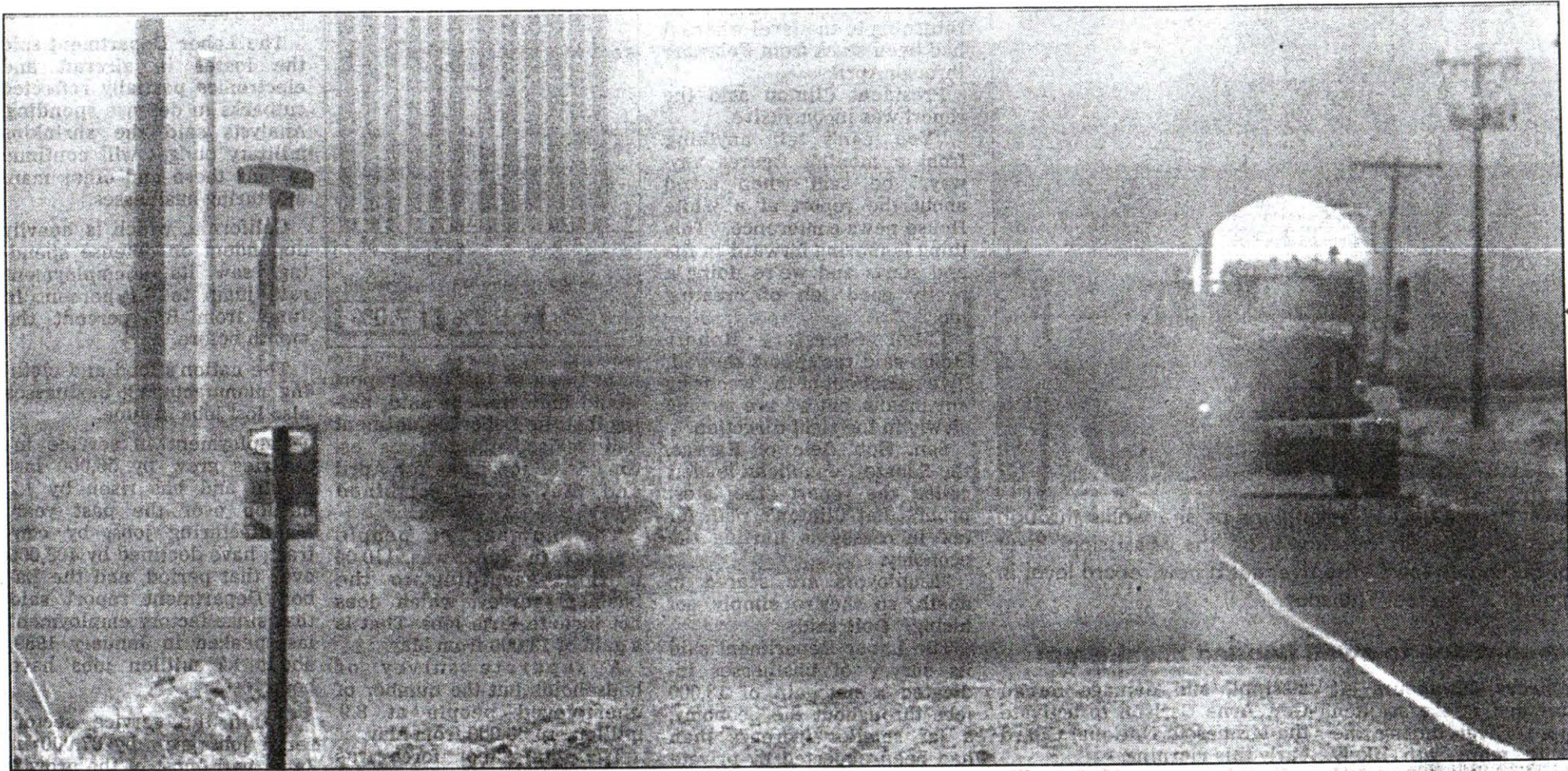
—From A1

higher air falls. The exchange in air begins swirling (usually in a counter-clockwise motion in the northern hemisphere). A prevailing wind kicks up dust that gets lifted into the column by the vacuum effect of the rising air, and the dust devil takes on its familiar form.

"Dust devils tend to dance from hot spot to hot spot, and when they run out of hot

spots, they collapse," said Chris Breckenridge, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

Most dust devils last only a few seconds before the differences in air temperature are stabilized. Dust devils typically travel no more than a few hundred feet and seldom leave behind more than a sprinkling of dust on your car or patio.



Stephen Chernet/Daily News-Sun

A dust devil spins across Litchfield Road south of Thunderbird Road. The whirlwinds are a common desert sight in the hot months.

Flooding paralyzes area traffic

Daily News-Sun staff

Torrential rains pelted the Northwest Valley Wednesday afternoon, turning streets into raging rivers, golf courses into lakes and forcing some motorists to wade to safety in nearly waist-deep water.

Dozens of intersections were closed by a 30-minute storm that dropped between 1 and 3 inches of rain.

New River and Skunk Creek crossings in Sun City and Peoria remained closed this morning.

Area hospitals, police and fire departments reported no injuries or property damage during the storm.

"If you like rain it was a good day, aid Dick Jarsensky, a Sun City weather watcher. "The yards were just standing like ponds."

Jarsensky, who lives north of Bell Road, said the rain gauge in his yard measured 1.9 inches between noon and 12:30 p.m. "I've never seen it rain that hard," he said.

Norm Shrenk measures precipitation in Youngtown. He said 1.09 inches fell in the retirement community between 11:50 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Peoria's emergency operations center was activated briefly as a precaution, said Fire Chief Mike Fusco. The center is activated to coordinate public services, police and fire responses to emergencies.

The heavy rains brought out the curious.

"I've been here 21 years and I've

See Golf course, A5

over



Stephen Cherneck/Daily News-Sun

The new Deer Valley Golf Course in Sun City West gets its first test as a flood retention basin.

Golf course passes flood test

—From A1

never seen anything like it," said Fred Henricksen as he sat in his golf car watching flood waters recede along 99th Avenue south of Thunderbird Road.

Henricksen was shuttling neighbors to and from a shopping center parking lot to watch the spectacle.

"We don't want to miss anything," said Helen Dowling, a neighbor of Henricksen who left home in her curlers to witness the flooding.

Runoff from north Sun City and Peoria turned 99th and other north-south routes into rivers. Stranded motorists watched for about 30 minutes as 99th turned into one giant drainage channel — the water spilling over the sidewalks and lapping onto a shopping center parking lot.

Sun City Fire Department personnel helped 10 people who became trapped along 99th when the 8-foot drainage channel separating north and south traffic overflowed, said battalion chief Ron Gilbert.

Antonia Olszewski was just a block from home when she became stranded in the rushing water at 99th and Santa Fe Drive.

"I was just trying to get home for lunch," Olszewski said as she watched the water run across the hood of her white sedan.

"After the engine died the car started to

float," Olszewski said. "A man helped me from my car."

Off-duty Sun City Posse members Chuck Fisher and Joseph DeNardo waited out the 99th Avenue flooding together, joking that they needed a pair of oars.

Fisher is a retired merchant marine and DeNardo is retired from the U.S. Coast Guard. "We're a couple of water boys watching the water go down," Fisher said.

Sun Cities area golf courses were open today, but only to golf-car path play.

Wednesday's storm provided a drainage test for the Deer Valley Golf Course in Sun City West's northern expansion area.

When the rain stopped, the course was under 2 to 3 feet of water but undamaged, according to Del Webb Corp. officials.

"It's (the golf course) designed to take all the runoff from the nearby neighborhoods and hold the water up to 36 hours while there is slow drainage off the course," said Martha Moyer, Webb spokeswoman.

That water eventually ends up in the Agua Fria River, Moyer said.

Agua Fria and New River runoff flows into the Salt River in south Phoenix.

No rain was in the forecast today or tomorrow.

Rec Centers' Storm Cleanup May Take Two More Weeks

279 Trees Destroyed on Courses; 200 More Toppled

By Jack Hawn

And the massive Sun City West Recreation Centers' cleanup operation continues...probably for two more weeks, at least.

Eight days after hurricane-like winds, reported at up to 115 miles per hour, struck the community with sudden, devastating force, evidence of the storm's destruction remains widespread, particularly on golf courses.

A second storm Sunday night, mild by comparison, apparently caused no further problems on Rec Centers' courses despite reports of additional downed trees in some areas of the community.

Golf carts were not permitted on some courses Monday morning, but last Thursday all courses except Desert Trails—the newest—were closed as a result of the storms.

"We estimate 279 trees were destroyed and 200 additional trees knocked over," said SCW Gen. Mgr. Vince Merenda Monday. "We'll try to save those that we can."

Eucalyptus, pines, elms, a few palms and "quite a few" willows were lost or damaged in the Aug. 14 storm, Merenda said. Hardest hit of the seven Rec Centers' courses was the Echo Mesa executive layout.

Most of the larger, mature trees were lost at Grandview and Pebblebrook, the older, regulation-size courses. Merenda hopes to replace them with "some good size trees."

"We're looking for help from outside contractors," he said. "(Removal of) big trees (stumps) will require heavier equipment than what we have."

Rec Centers' facilities and surrounding property were damaged as well, including tile roofs at

"The dedication of the staff is what was so impressive. They put in hours and hours of overtime..."

—Joe Kershisnik



various locations, ceiling fans, swimming pool patio furniture and landscaping plants such as large cacti, some costing as much as \$2,000.

Merenda said "all the roofs lost a little tile," worst of which was the Stardust Golf Course clubhouse.

"Our maintenance man estimated probably about \$40,000 in replacement costs for equipment and repairs. That doesn't include golf courses."

The newly hired general manager, who escorted insurance adjusters around the courses and

"We've had comments from residents who said they couldn't believe (workmen) got so much cleaned up so fast."

—Vince Merenda



facilities last week, could provide no immediate estimate on golf-course financial losses as a result of the storm.

Except for "small deductibles," the Association's insurance, St. Paul Insurance Co. of Minnesota, will pick up the tab, according to Treas. Joe Kershisnik.

"If we had to hire somebody to do all the cleanup," he said, "which the insurance covers, it would cost a heck of a lot more than the labor of our staff."

Deductibles vary, he explained.

"I think there's a \$500 deductible on storm damage, there's a \$1,000 maximum per tree (that insurance pays)...We're going to have very little out of pocket. Outside of the deductible, the insurance will cover most of our expense.

"The dedication of the staff is what was so impressive," Kershisnik continued. "They put in hours and hours of overtime to get our facilities back on line when their own homes were damaged..."

"It takes a lot for a guy to leave his wife and kids in a house that's damaged and come in and work here. There's more to it than any overtime (pay) they might get."

Merenda also complimented his staff.

"They've done an excellent job," he said. "We've had comments from residents who said they couldn't believe they got so much cleaned up so fast."

Kershisnik believed the overall damage could have been considerably worse.

"We're damned lucky we didn't have flat roofs," he said. "If 115-mile-an-hour winds came through on flat roofs, we would have some major problems."

Merenda concurred.

"When you consider the amount of facilities we have, we were fortunate that we didn't have more damage to our buildings," he said. "It was bad enough."

He was thankful no employees were injured.

Valley residents remember fury of the storm

'It was a phenomenal thing to see'

Staff report

It came into the Valley like a living, malevolent being.

"It was a truly frightening experience," said Mike Finney, a Tempe marketing consultant who was flying into Sky Harbor International from Las Vegas as a billowing mountain range of dust moved across the north Valley.

"It was a phenomenal thing to see. There was a beautiful low light piercing in there (through the dust clouds)," he said.

Finney's flight was unable to land in the winds that gusted up to 120 mph. His flight returned to Las Vegas to refuel and later landed in Phoenix, after three attempts.

The storm attacked at dusk. With stinging punches of wind and rain, it swept across the north and west Valley, slicing shingles from roofs, uprooting trees, knocking down power lines and tossing heavy objects around Styrofoam.

Craig Pribyl, 18, was eating at Johnny Rockets, a restaurant in Glendale's Arrowhead Towne Center, when the storm hit.

"There was a thunderous boom, and glass came crashing down," he said. A window near the food court on the upper mall level had shattered.

Not far away, at 47th Avenue and Happy Valley Road, Marvin Collins watched as the storm raged.

"I saw large trees and block walls blown over, stop signs bent over, touching the ground," he said.

As the storm hit his house, it tore off roof tiles and pounded the garage.

"It looks like somebody drove a car into it," he said of his garage door.

Larry Balcom, who lives near Happy Valley Road and Interstate 17, said the strong winds made his cars in the driveway "jump around on their springs."

Near 41st Avenue and Happy

Valley Road, Jason Harrison watched the winds rip down part of his neighbor's fence and damage the roof.

"The shingles came off like paper off a pad," he said.

The winds and storm marched across the Valley, leaving odd results.

Golf courses resembled obstacle courses as trees, brush and debris were tossed onto the greens and fairways.

A pontoon boat capsized on the private lake at Desert Harbor, a residential development in Peoria. Other boats tore loose from moorings and skittered across the lake, slamming into the far side.

The storm's fury struck at random. The glass top of a patio table shattered, yet the table, umbrella and chairs remained untouched at a Peoria home. Ceramic tiles on a house under construction north of Pinnacle Peak were left neatly stacked on the roof, while the tiles next door were plucked from the roof.

Those driving around town, couldn't believe what they saw.

Kelley Harvey was headed home near 87th and Peoria avenues when she saw a garage door in the middle of the road.

As the storm hit, many people — and animals — headed for shelter.

At Sun Struck Ranch northwest

of Sun City West, Barbara Hugill and her husband, Bob, braved the strong winds to go after about 100 of their ostrich chicks.

"The big birds have enough sense to just sit down in the high winds, but we had to round up all of the chicks," she said. "We had high winds like you can't believe."

The storm continued to rage as it moved through the southwest Valley.

Downtown Buckeye suffered relatively minor damage in the storm, but a mobile home park called Leaf Verde three miles north wasn't so lucky.

The wind shoved two mobile homes from their stands, pulled awnings from homes and left the park without water and electricity.

TO OUR READERS

The storm Wednesday night knocked out power at Phoenix Newspapers Inc.'s Deer Valley production plant, resulting in the delivery of some newspapers produced under earlier deadlines.

As a result, some readers received papers that did not include coverage of the storm or the latest details from the Republican National Convention and had day-old baseball coverage in the Sports section. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Contributing to this article were staff writers Robert Barrett, Mike Padgett, Jennifer Barrett, Lourdes Medrano Leslie, Barbara Deters, Jim Gintonio, Jeff Nelson, Connie Cone Sexton, Angela Rabago-Mussi and Steve Yozwiak.

Oh my! It's coming at us!

Gusts of 115 mph rip area

Staff report

Hurricane-force winds blasted through the Northwest Valley Wednesday night, tearing off roofs, leveling huge trees and road signs and cutting off electricity to the entire Sun Cities area.

The strongest winds ever recorded in the Valley — 115-mile per hour gusts measured at the Deer Valley Airport — pushed a vicious thunderstorm through the area just after 6 p.m. Wednesday, according to Craig Ellis, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

While the darkened skies reflected only shadows of damage Wednesday night, this morning's sunrise revealed signs of the storm's devastation everywhere.

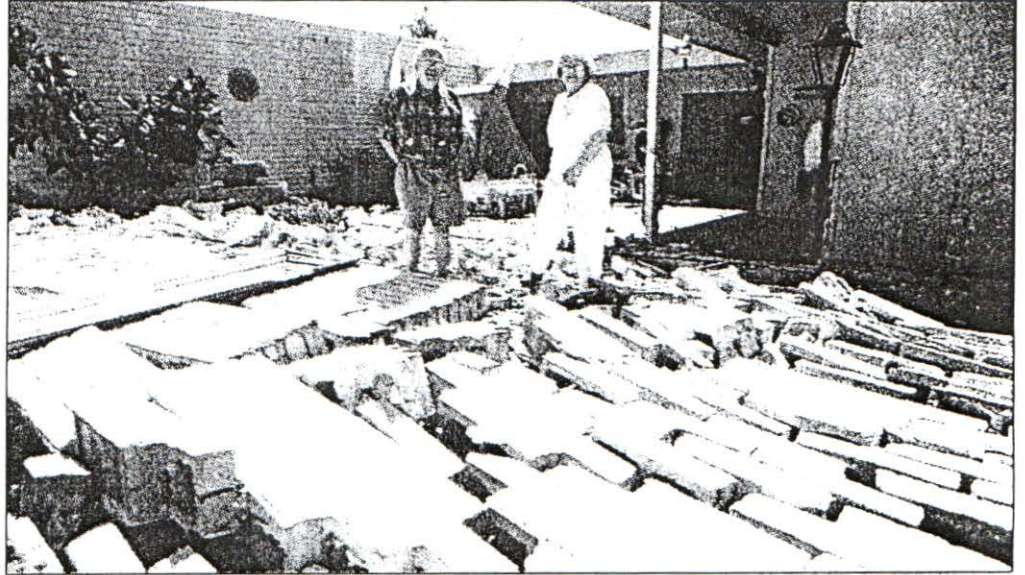
From the large sycamore trees leveled at the Sun City Country Club to the extensive roof damage at Arrowhead Community Hospital, effects of the worst storm in recent years were obvious.



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

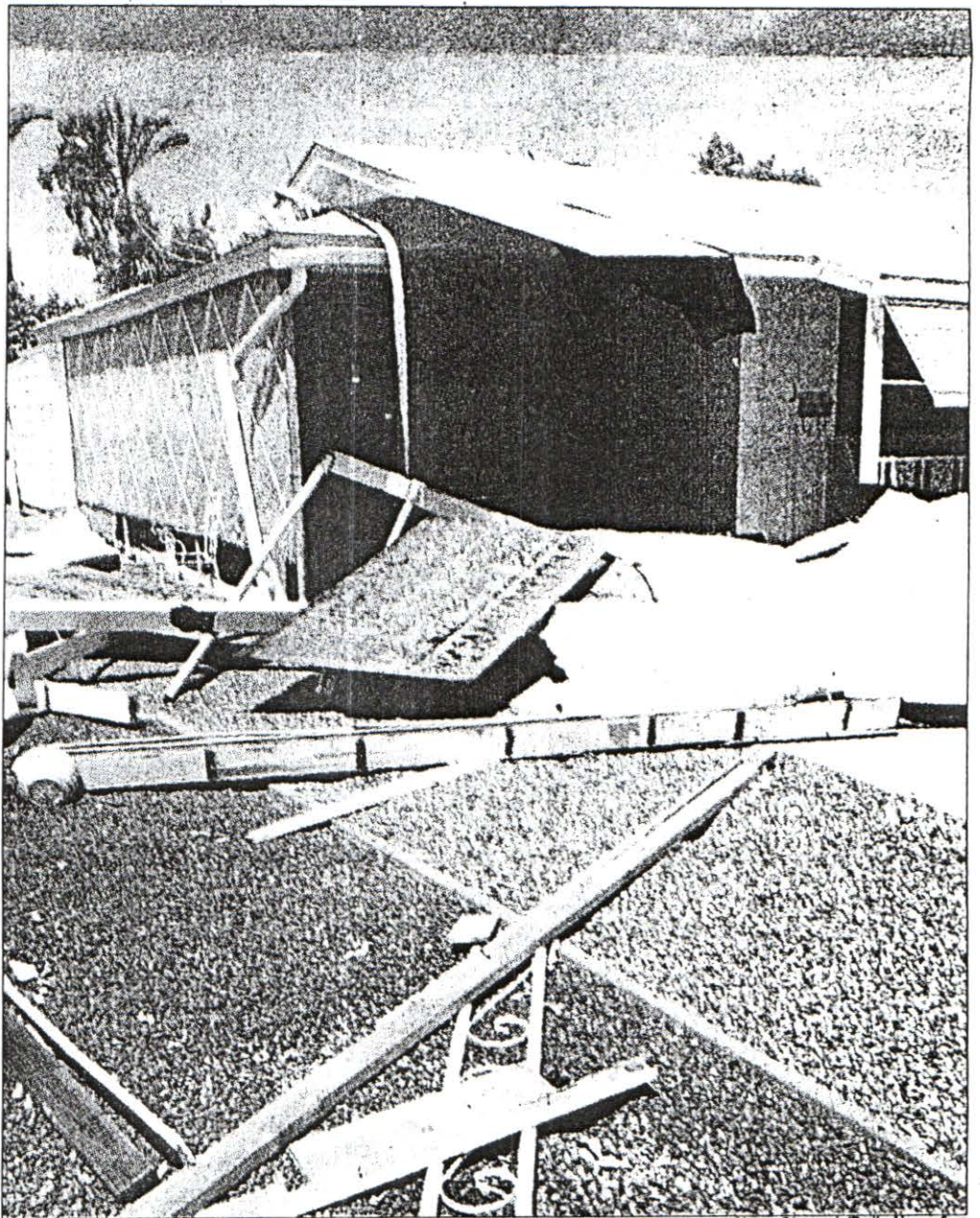
Marjorie Clifford of Sun City walks around a downed Aleppo Pine in a yard behind a house on El Capitan. Neighbors were out on area streets this morning assessing the damage from Wednesday night's storm.

The STORM of '96



Mollie J. Hoppes/Daily News-Sun

Erick and Marge Franzen, above, of Sun City, were out shopping with their visiting grandchildren when the storm hit. When they returned, they thought a car had wrecked into their patio wall.



Steve Chemek/Daily News-Sun

Gusting winds knocked the roof over the Arizona room of the residence at left on Sun City Boulevard.

Utility crews hard at work

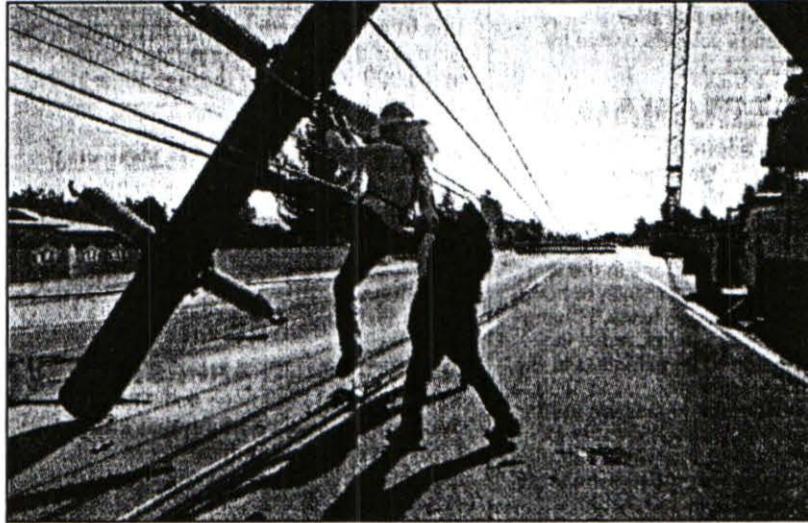
18,000 homes face 2nd night in dark

By David Wichner
Staff writer

As many as 18,000 households were expected to sweat through a second day without electricity today in the aftermath of a violent storm that ripped through the west Valley on Wednesday night.

Utility crews were worked feverishly Thursday to replace about 400 power poles that snapped in the storm's heavy winds, darkening up to 270,000 households.

About two-thirds of the 250,000 Arizona Public Service Co. customers hit with outages when the storm swept through about 6:30 p.m. had their power restored within about four hours, APS said. About 20,000 Salt River Project customers initially lost power.



Bryan Chan/Staff photographer
A crew from the Salt River Project works at replacing downed power lines along Camelback Road at 75th Avenue in Phoenix.

By midmorning Thursday, about 21,000 APS customers and 7,500 SRP customers still had no power. In addition, thousands were without telephone and cable-TV service, US West and Cox Communications reported.

APS expected to have power turned back on for about 5,000 customers by late Thursday, spokesman Bruce Richardson said.

"I think the majority of the

people will be back up by the end of Friday, except for isolated pockets," he said.

SRP spokesman Jeff Lane said the utility hoped to restore power by late Thursday or early today to about 3,500 customers who remained without electricity Thursday afternoon.

"We've pretty much got the

— See 18,000, page A21

over

18,000 homes face 2nd night in dark

— 18,000, from page A1

largest chunks back up," Lane said, adding that SRP crews had replaced about half of its 100 downed poles as of late Thursday.

The outage was the worst for APS since Labor Day 1994, when a storm knocked out power to about 150,000 customers, Richardson said.

APS had its entire line-maintenance staff of more than 300 technicians, plus two four-man crews lent by Tucson Electric Power Co., repairing major power lines.

Initial efforts focused on restoring power to Valley hospitals and public-safety agencies, although they were able to run on backup generators.

About half of APS' downed poles were 65-footers that support 69,000-volt lines, which can each serve six substations. As those lines were repaired, the crews turned to smaller, 12,000-volt lines, which serve up to 2,500 customers, Richardson said.

"As you go out and do your system triage, you do those that are going to get the most customers up first," he said.

Unfortunately, that means that some customers may find themselves without power while their neighbors are up and running.

"The line could go down and there could be two customers out at the end of the line," Richardson said. "There's going to be a fair number of customers scattered around that are going to be out for a day or two."

Some customers left without power in central Phoenix may be frustrated because they saw no storm damage in their neighborhoods, he said.

"Just because they look out their window and don't see their neighbor's roof laying in their back yard doesn't mean the wind didn't come in and slap two conductors together and create a fault," Richardson said.

APS and SRP both were deluged with customer calls, but most people were understanding.

"This is just a case of Mother Nature," SRP's Lane said. "We're doing everything we can to get people back up as fast as we can."

Both utilities have cut their payrolls in recent years, mainly to gear up for expected competition

as regulators move to deregulate the industry.

APS believes its line-maintenance department is adequately staffed to handle most major outages, Richardson said.

"We could have 1,000 people working this kind of outage and have everyone up within a few hours, but what are you going to do with them after the outage?" he asked. "You have to balance the needs of the system with the need to be competitive."

However, Richardson said, the outage, which comes on the heels of one last weekend that left 4 million people across the West without power, raises questions of who will be responsible for restoring power quickly after non-utility power marketers are allowed to enter the market.

"Who's going to be accountable to make sure power gets to your house?" he asked. "Who's going to care?"

State regulators say they care about APS' response to major outages and are concerned that customers were having trouble getting through to the utility on the phone, said Jon Poston, spokesman for the Arizona Corpo-

ration Commission.

APS was pleased with its call-handling, Richardson said.

The utility fielded 20,000 customer calls Wednesday night and an additional 25,000 by midafternoon Thursday, answering six out of 10 within 20 seconds, he said.

The outage also left thousands of area residents without phone service and cable-TV signals.

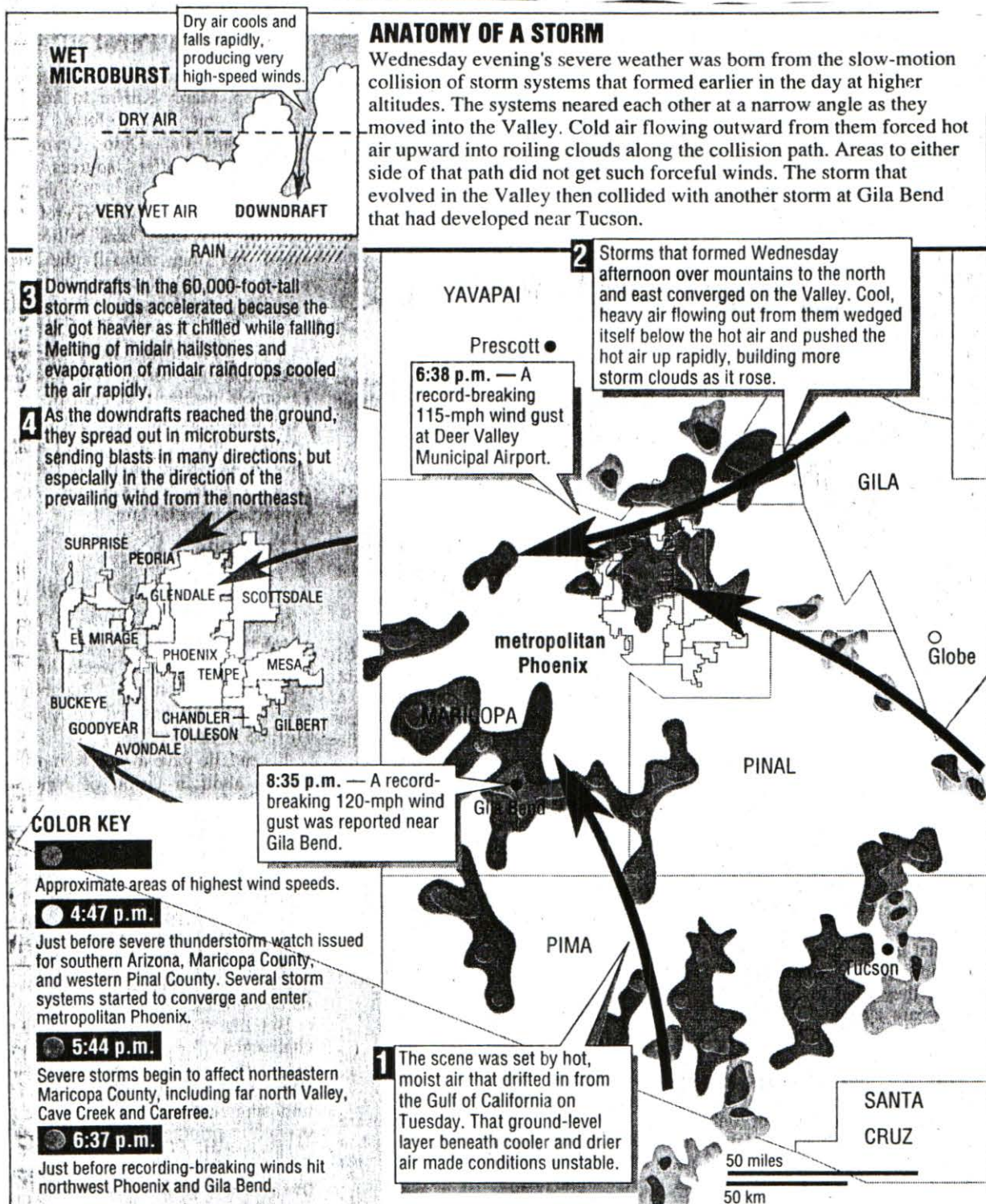
Although precise figures weren't available, US West estimated that 1 to 3 percent of its 1.4 million Valley lines, up to 40,000 lines, may have had some problems.

Most of the phone lines are buried and central-office switches have generator backups, but underground equipment vaults that rely on battery backup power may go down if power is not restored promptly, US West spokesman Jim Roof said.

"Unless power is restored, we are in jeopardy of more phone outages," Roof said.

About 75,000 of Cox's 430,000 Valley customers may have lost cable-TV service, but most were expected to be back up sometime today, said Ivan Johnson, Cox vice president of community relations.

West Valley digging out after fierce storm



Sources: National Weather Service, Phoenix and National Severe Storms Laboratory

Guy Webster/Staff writer, Joe Willie Smith/Staff artist

STORM CHRONOLOGY

1:15 p.m.: Severe weather outlook issued.

2:12 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm watch issued for southeastern Arizona, including extreme eastern Maricopa County.

4:20 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm warning issued for northwestern Pinal County.

4:55 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm watch issued for southeastern Arizona, including Maricopa and western Pinal counties.

5:55 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm warning issued for Cave Creek-Carefree area.

6:20 p.m.: Severe thunderstorms affect north Valley from Scottsdale to Sun City.

6:33 p.m.: Wind gust estimated at more than 100 mph reported in Glendale between Pinnacle Peak and Happy Valley roads. Considerable damage reported with 1-inch hail.

6:38 p.m.: Wind gust of 115 mph at Deer Valley Municipal Airport.

6:45 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm warning issued for north and west Valley.

6:50 p.m.: Wind gust of 85 mph five miles west of Luke Air Force Base.

7:15 p.m.: Wind gust of 69 mph at the Goodyear airport.

7:17 p.m.: Flash-flood advisory issued for central and west Valley.

7:41 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm warning issued for western Maricopa County.

8:05 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm warning issued for southwestern Maricopa County, including Gila Bend.

8:15 p.m.: Valley warnings expire.

8:35 p.m.: Wind gust of 120 mph at Gila Bend Air Force Base Auxiliary Airport.

8:55 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm warning issued for eastern Yuma County.

9:08 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm warning issued for southwestern Maricopa County between Gila Bend and Ajo.

9:41 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm warning issued for central Yuma County, including Dateland and Tacna.

10:15 p.m.: Severe thunderstorm warning issued for western Yuma County, including Yuma. Power poles down in Tacna.

10:35 p.m.: Wind gust of 48 mph reported at Yuma Marine Corps Air Station. Zero visibility from blowing dust.

10:40 p.m.: Warning for eastern and central Yuma County expires.

10:45 p.m.: Power lines down in Yuma.

11:37 p.m.: Warning for western Yuma County expires.

VF--Weather

of year.

Storm debris still clutters streets

Staff report

One week after hurricane-force winds ripped through the Northwest Valley downing trees and tearing off roofing, residents are still struggling to clean up the mess.

The Sun City PRIDES were out Saturday morning, but many members are giving extra hours this week to clean up the mess.

"It's going pretty good considering a lot of PRIDES are out of town," said PRIDE Waldo Smith. "It would be going a lot faster if this happened in November. We'd have more people and it would be more comfortable and we could get more done. I know I was out this morning for about three hours."

The county is busy removing the large debris caused by the storm because the PRIDES don't have the

equipment necessary to remove the big items, Smith said.

Local residents who are doing their own cleanup have been relying on Parks and Sons of Sun City to pick up their debris. Normally, the company doesn't accept construction-type debris, but it has been hauling off shingles.

In Surprise, residents have two options, said Michael Branham, Surprise assistant city manager. They can call 583-1000 to arrange for a pick up or if they have a truck to haul some of it, there is a trash transfer point at the northwest corner of Dysart Road and Grand Avenue.

Peoria officials are urging residents not to dispose of shingles and other roof debris in their trash con-

► See Roofing materials, A7
over



Steve Cherek/Daily News-Sun



Steve Cherek/Daily News-Sun

LaVonne Schwarz, a member of the Sun City PRIDES, cleans up tree branches on the Del Webb Boulevard median at Bayside Road.

Sun City PRIDE volunteer Veikko Lindberg sweeps the gutter along Del Webb Boulevard at Bayside Road following last week's storm.

Roofing materials jam trucks

■ From A1

tainers.

Roofing materials are jamming the compactors on the city's sanitation trucks. This reduces the hauling capacity of the trucks and forces them to make more trips to the landfill.

Residents and/or roofing contractors should dispose of the roofing materials at area landfills themselves or bring them to the Peoria Municipal Operations Center, 8850 N. 79th Ave. Larger items can be scheduled for pick up by calling 412-7431.

Due to the emergency status, regular pickup of appliances and other large items will not be scheduled until the storm debris cleanup is completed.

Youngtown residents who have storm debris may drop it off at the former Vencor hospital site on 113th Avenue for pickup by town crews.

Use the former helicopter landing pad on the south side of the building.

Town officials said the invitation includes tree limbs and brush, shingles and metal from roofs or patio covers — but not household garbage.

The items must be in place by late Thursday, since it will be removed early Friday to a proper dump for disposal.

For information, call the town office at 933-8286.

Several local organizations are extending a helping hand to make cleanup easier and prevent further damage. The American Red Cross and the Salvation Army are providing plastic sheeting for people with roof damage from the storm.

Red Cross also will help families whose homes have been destroyed, who have lost the roofs (not just shingles) or who have major damage. Families will be counseled regarding resources available to them and may receive vouchers to purchase what they need through local merchants.

For information, call 336-6680 for more information.

This isn't the first assistance being offered through the Red Cross. Seventeen paid staff members and 145 volunteers have been out serving nearly 7,100 meals, and manning four shelters. A total of 111 people spent nights in shelters.

The city of Glendale also is bending its rules to make repairs easier. It is waiving all building permit fees for property owners in Glendale who have suffered storm-related damage and who need a permit in order to make repairs to their homes or property.

City officials recommend residents seek licensed contractors to do their repair work. They also advise property owners to obtain the appropriate free city building

permits so that inspectors can monitor the work being done.

For information, call 930-2800.

No matter how much assistance is available, some locations will feel the thrashing of the storm for many weeks. The Peoria Unified School District is one of those locations.

Three of the district's elementary schools severely damaged by last week's storm may not open on time.

School officials, in an emergency meeting this morning, are determining the extent of the damage and what to do if the schools can't open Sept. 3.

Among the options are sending children to other schools while repairs are done at the three heavily damaged schools. They are:

■ Sahuaro Ranch Elementary in Glendale.

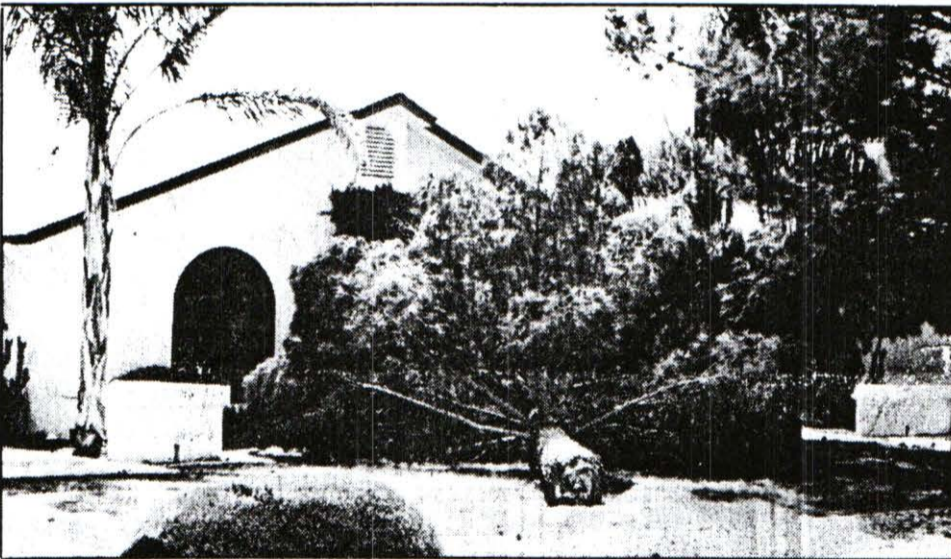
■ Kachina Elementary School in Glendale.

■ Oasis Elementary School in Peoria.

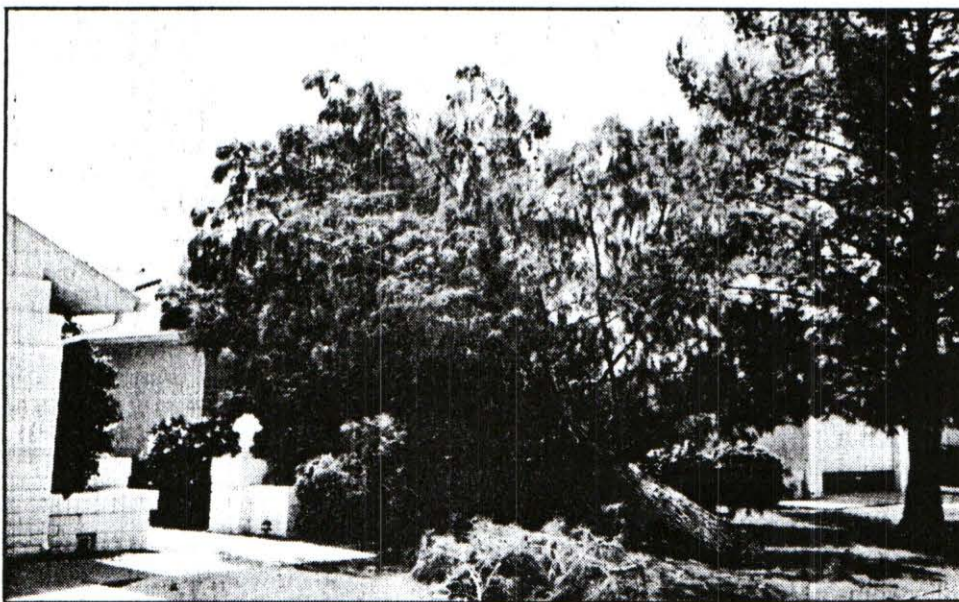
Staff writers Peter Banda, Bruce Ellison, Greg Zemeida and Jeannie Johnson contributed to this report.

Monsoon Memories 1996

'I Think That I Shall Never See...as Lovely as a Tree'



Although most neighborhoods in Sun City West were hit pretty hard by last week's storm, properties on Blue Sky Dr. Took a particularly hard hit. In only a half block, over a dozen full grown trees were toppled. Only one home sustained damage from falling limbs, but most homes experienced roofing damage. Photos, Gene Palm





An estimated 279 trees were destroyed last week on the seven SCW Recreation Centers' golf courses, including the two at right. Echo Mesa was the hardest-hit course, where most of the trees were uprooted, such as the one in top photo. Below is another mature tree downed on the Pebblebrook course. Clean-up operations will continue for about two more weeks, according to Gen. Mgr. Vince Merenda. Details Inside. Photos, SCW Rec Centers



Supervisors Declare State of Emergency as County Recovers from Major Storm

The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors has declared a state of emergency to aid the cleanup of storm damage in several hard-hit West Valley communities.

"This declaration frees up the county resources necessary to speed the recovery from an exceptionally violent summer storm," said Ed King, District 4 supervisor and chairman of the Board. "We have county residents who are without water or power and are facing serious threats to their health and safety."

The Board, in a separate proclamation urged Gov. Fife Symington to declare a state of emergency for the county. The Gov. issued the declaration on Aug. 15.

The county's emergency declaration allows the county to tap its own resources for the cleanup. The state declaration allows the

county to seek assistance from state agencies and departments, including involvement of the National Guard and use of state trucks and other heavy equipment in cleanup and restoration operations.

Much of the West Valley was struck by heavy rains and winds in excess of 100 mph in the evening of Aug. 14, resulting in downed power lines and trees, local flooding, and destruction of homes and businesses. County residents in Glendale, Peoria, El Mirage, Surprise, Sun City and Sun City West sustained the most severe damage.

"Our residents have critical needs that can be met by the county," King added. "Our transportation, flood control and emergency management personnel have been working continuously to meet those needs."

COUPON



Lisa Goettsche/Daily News-Sun

Night settles over 99th Avenue, where motorists carefully navigate the flood waters after Tuesday's monsoon.

Rising water strands motorists, closes 99th

By TINA SCHADE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Three Sun City women were on their way to a card game when Mother Nature dealt them a bad hand.

Marion Dutton, Clarice Burke and Ellen Lantaff were traveling north on 99th Avenue through curb-high water — a result of the monsoon's inaugural rainfall.

Dutton figured she could maneuver her Honda through the crest, but the water swelled so high so quickly, the car stalled and the three found themselves stranded near Hutton Drive. The women admitted to feeling uneasy.

"But it wasn't too scary," Lantaff said.

While waiting for Sun City firefighters to arrive, the three women spent their time watching wooden pallets bob down the street.

"Debris was coming down the road at you. It was wild," said Ken Swick, Sun City Fire Department battalion chief.

The wood was being used as part of a Maricopa County Department of Transportation project designed to improve water flow in the 99th Avenue canal.

From A1

To protect supplies and equipment during the project, MCDOT dammed certain areas of the canal so regular water flow wouldn't damage the equipment sitting in other sectioned off areas of the trench.

But with Tuesday's heavy rains, the dammed areas overflowed the canal and ran into the street, sometimes to levels 4-feet high, said Jaime Soto, a Sun City firefighter.

Mary Giacini, who referred to herself as "too stupid to stay out of deep water," found out firsthand how quickly the water could rise.

Figuring she would avoid fast and heavy traffic on Loop 101, the Peoria woman hopped on 99th Avenue as an alternate route. While Giacini may have dodged accidents by leaving

the freeway, she was hit head on by a wall of water that consumed her van, rising up to the middle of her doors.

"I didn't think 99th Avenue would turn into a half-mile long swimming pool," she said.

Neighbors along 99th Avenue watched over their fences as firefighters pulled the women from their cars and onto dry land.

Five other people in Sun City were also stranded after the storm.

Nobody was injured in Tuesday's flooding, Swick said. And all of the stranded who were not able to drive their disabled vehicles were taken home.

Not ones to be trumped, Dutton, Burke and Lantaff, requested they be taken to the home where they were expected for a game of bridge.

See Road construction, A5

Storm slams Sun Cities



Lisa Goettsche/Daily News-Sun

Trucks plow through flood waters on 99th Avenue in Sun City Tuesday evening. Firefighters rescued nine people who were stranded because of the deep water.

Rain pummels Northwest Valley

By GINGER SCOTT-EIDEN
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A blanket of deadly dust and thunderstorms descended upon the Valley Tuesday, stranding motorists on 99th Avenue in Sun City and flooding homes in Surprise.

While mid-Sun City was pounded with up to 1.9 inches of rain, crippling motorists on 99th Avenue from Bell

Road south to Thunderbird, other pockets in the Northwest Valley were also hit hard, officials said.

Rainfall reached 1.02 inches at Dysart and Bell roads, according to Maricopa Flood Control District automated gauges. Up to 1.3 inches was reported in Sun City West. And more showers are expected tonight.

Three Sun City women traveling north on 99th Avenue were trapped in

their car Tuesday afternoon because of curb-high water, said Sun City Fire Battalion Chief Ken Swick.

"A lot of rain fell along 99th at one time," Swick said. "The water always dumps into the ditch that runs in the middle of 99th, but because of construction the ditch filled up and water

See Homes flooded, A

OVER

VF

WEATHER

Homes flooded by intense rain

From A1

went over the street.”

The heaviest flooding was a two-mile stretch between Hutton Drive and Thunderbird, Swick said.

Engineers from the Maricopa County Department of Transportation surveyed that stretch of 99th Avenue this morning to see if the flooding will affect the construction schedule, a spokeswoman said.

“They lost some reenforcement forms and there was some water damage, but they’ll be back in construction mode this afternoon,” said Helen Carroll, spokeswoman for MCDOT. “They’ll probably lose a couple of days.”

Water was knee-deep along Paradise Lane in Surprise, said Capt. Randy Farley of the Surprise Fire Department.

Firefighters were called out

to three houses with flooding or leaking problems due to the rain, Farley said.

Two homes in the 12600 block of Paradise Lane were being swamped by flooding waters, and firefighters had to barricade doors with dirt and sandbags, he said. Another home’s roof was leaking from the heavy rains causing fire alarms to sound.

“It got pretty intense there for a while,” Farley said. “There was a lot of lightning and intense rain for about an hour and a half.”

The investigation of the Fourth of July firework malfunction at the Peoria Sports Complex on 83rd Avenue and Bell Road was not hampered by the heavy rains, said Mike Tellef, public information officer for the Peoria Fire Department.

The Sun City West Fire Department did not report any

calls for service because of the storm. Business was also slow at Del E. Webb and Walter O. Boswell Memorial hospitals, officials said.

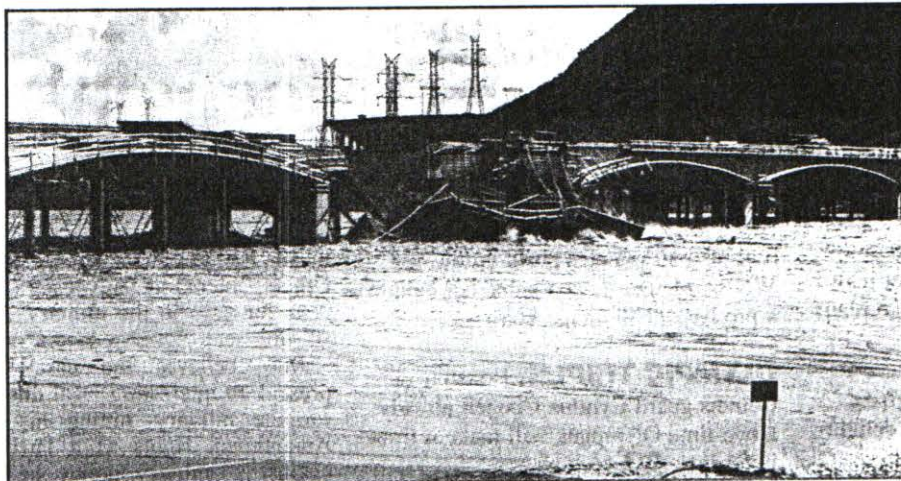
A tornado touched down in the East Valley about 3 p.m. as the monsoon battered the area with blinding dust, winds of up to 40 mph, bottle-cap sized hail and up to 1¼ inches of rain. It

flooded streets, delayed flights, felled power lines and stalled traffic. The National Weather Service predicts the possibility of thunderstorms again today.

Ginger Scott-Eiden can be reached by e-mail at gscott@aztrib.com or by calling 8 7 6 - 2 5 2 2 .

Penelope Overton contributed to this report.

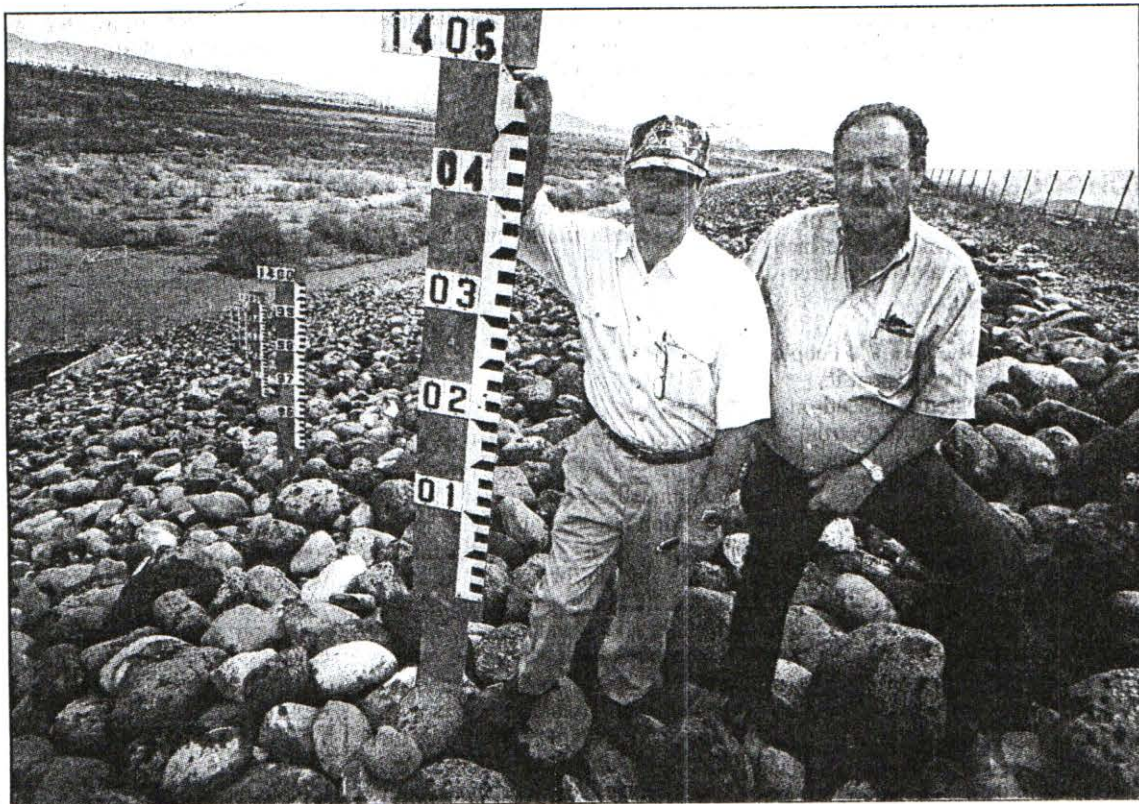
'Big, ugly monster' keeping homes dry as . . .



Nancy Engebretson/The Arizona Republic

The middle section of the Mill Avenue Bridge, under construction in January 1993, collapsed after heavy rains sent the Salt River on a muddy rampage.

Valley tames monsoon floods



Mark Schiefelbein/The Arizona Republic

The Adobe Mountain flood-control dam in north Phoenix is checked out by Michael Ellegood (left) and George Lindop of the Maricopa County Flood Control District.

MORE INSIDE

BEFORE YOU BUY: Advice from the Maricopa County Flood Control District. **A12.**

RISK GROWS: Flood planners are moving into uncharted territory as new housing developments chew up more desert on the fringe of the metropolitan area. **A13.**

MASTER PLAN: Detail map of the Maricopa County flood-control program. **A12.**

Major floods and damage estimates in Maricopa County

YEAR	MONTH	DAMAGE ESTIMATE
1993	Jan.	\$38 million
1980	Feb.	\$63.7 million
1978	Dec.	\$51.8 million
1978	March	\$37 million
1972	June	\$10.6 million
1970	Sept.	\$590,000
1963	Aug.	\$2.9 million
1965-66	Winter	\$6 million

Source: Maricopa County Flood Control District

The Arizona Republic

By Mike McCloy
The Arizona Republic

For most Valley residents, today's monsoon storms barely make a curbside puddle, thanks to four decades of flood-control projects built by the Maricopa County Flood Control District.

The district's more than 80 major dams, ditches and drains proved themselves worthy last month, when 2 inches of rain pounded the Valley on July 14 and 15.

Twenty years ago, that kind of soaking left residents wading in the streets and sandbagging their doors. But not this time.

The Flood Control District's 200-member staff will celebrate the agency's

40th anniversary on Sunday. Armed with an annual budget of \$88 million, the district weather-proofs the Valley's developed landscape with little notice, except when its plans collide with politicians and property owners.

Former Phoenix Mayor Margaret Hance was among the most vocal critics, especially of the Arizona Canal Diversion Channel, which in 1976 she called the "big ugly monster."

Also known as the AC-DC, the 17-mile concrete ditch took 25 years and nearly \$300 million to complete. It collects water from streets and washes and carries it beside the Arizona Canal from 40th Street in Phoenix to Peoria.

— Please see **MONSOONS**, Page A12

OVER

Today, the AC-DC is one of the major reasons older portions of Phoenix no longer flood.

"All that water north of it used to come in there," said Herb Donald, 85, the Flood Control District's retired general manager. He recalled regular floods along 19th Avenue where Cave Creek would spill over the Arizona Canal and sometimes flow all the way to the state Capitol basement.

During last month's storm, Donald said, "there wasn't a word mentioned in the paper; that thing did its job."

Over the years, scorn of the AC-DC also subsided as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers adorned the ditch with wrought-iron fences, bicycle paths, mesquite trees and a recreation area where it flows into Skunk Creek.

Newcomers often surprised

Even with such improvements, the Salt River Valley's constant flow of newcomers are surprised by the desert's flash floods, where a year's worth of rain can fall in a day.

Washes, creeks and rivers swell with monsoon-driven storm runoff and mountain snowmelt from a watershed the size of Michigan.

For eons, it all funneled to the Gila River on the Valley's southwestern side, flowed to the Colorado and eventually emptied into the Gulf of California.

Today, that funnel is clogged with 100 years of agricultural and urban growth.

Even with its many improvements, the district still is struggling to catch up with Valley growth.

In Glendale, for example, where new homes are built dangerously close to Skunk Creek, workers fill wire cages with rocks to bolster the edge of a flash-flood area.

"This is nuts," said Mike Ellegood, the district's chief engineer and general manager. The "industrial strength" bank-protection project will protect the homes. But the creek becomes a landscaped ditch, he said, instead of open space for human recreation and animal habitat, which is the future of flood control.

"We're trying to do some planning before development occurs," Ellegood said during a recent tour of the booming northwest Valley.

The district has joined Maryvale developer John F. Long in planning for that future, along with Avondale, Phoenix, Glendale and Peoria.

40 miles of trails

The West Valley Recreation Corridor would link Estrella Mountain Park and Lake Pleasant with 40 miles of trails, sports fields and parks along the flood-protected Agua Fria River.

The trail system could branch east along New River, Skunk Creek and the AC-DC to the Salt River, where planned Rio Salado improvements would complete a loop back to the Gila River near Estrella Mountain Park.

"That's the dream," Ellegood said. "I don't know how much I can do as flood-control manager, but we're trying."

In its early years, the Flood Control District pushed for major dams and concrete-lined diversions.

In recent years, the district and its affiliated state and federal flood-control agencies have tried a softer approach.

In the 1970s, the Army Corps of Engineers was persuaded to drop plans for a concrete ditch along Scottsdale's Indian Bend Wash. Instead, the engineers turned it into a greenbelt that flows during heavy rains, but dries into a long, lush playground.

"We used to call them cement heads," said Don Steuter, Valley conservation chairman for the Sierra Club. "The only thing they knew how to do was pour cement. Now, they're trying to keep people from building in the floodplain, rather than a concrete approach."

Some are not happy

But some landowners are not happy.

"I don't want my client to talk to you," attorney Larry Lazarus said. "He's so mad, he wants to sue them right now."

His Chicago client has owned 120 commercial acres for three generations. Phoenix's North Black Canyon (flood-control) Plan would use zoning to keep developers farther away from washes than ever before.

"This cuts the property value by 60 percent," Lazarus said. "They'll be destroyed."

The situation will simmer for 11 months while the Flood Control District studies the city's plan.

Politically, it's more difficult to build massive flood-control structures.

In north Scottsdale, for example, high desert residents are upset with a \$100 million plan by Scottsdale and the Flood Control District for a greenbelt to control sudden storm flows that can overflow washes. City officials say the project will protect existing homes and businesses and a planned freeway.

"We violently disagree," said Marcita Ryon, one of a group of protesting homeowners near Pinnacle Peak. "It is being touted so Phoenix can do high-density development on the west side of Scottsdale Road.

"The alternative is to leave it the heck alone. The washes have run for thousands of years with no problem at all."

Army Corps of Engineers regulator Cynthia Lester has delayed the project for a possible environmental study, to the delight of Ryon and her neighbors.

Throughout the Valley, washes have been blocked by canal banks and choked by roads. Developers carved the place into a million pieces and dumped their drainage on each other.

Mother Nature struck back in 1891 when the Salt River floated pigs away and left people clinging to trees from Southern Avenue to Van Buren Street.

In 1921, 1933, 1943 and 1951, the headlines were the same. Only the model year of the swamped automobiles changed. The Valley was flooded again and again.

An act of Congress

It took an act of Congress to bring Valley-wide flood protection.

The Federal Flood Insurance Act of 1956 promised coverage if local governments would help build flood protection and limit development in flood plains. Three years later, in 1959, the Arizona Legislature approved the flood-control district and gave it the authority to levy property taxes. The rate now is 29 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation, or about \$29 annually on a home assessed at \$100,000.

The county had only 630,000 people and \$600 million in taxable property when the district began operating on Aug. 15, 1959. Now, the population approaches 2.9 million and the district must protect taxable property worth \$161 billion, as well as public facilities worth billions more.

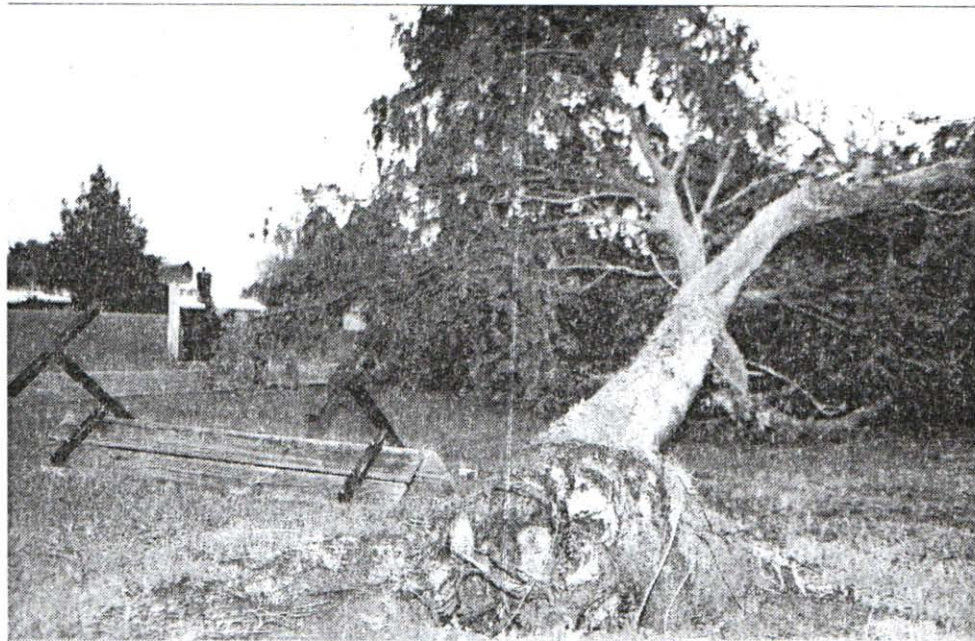
Many of the district's projects were sparked in 1972, when a late June monsoon storm sent Cudia City Wash over the top of the Arizona Canal, inundating 34 homes around 40th Street and Camelback Road. Valley-wide, the flood caused \$10.6 million in damage.

Legislators increased the district's tax rate to 50 cents after massive floods in 1978, 1979 and 1980 knocked out all but two bridges across the Salt River, virtually paralyzing the Valley.

Additional flood-control projects also gave Congress assurances that the Central Arizona Project would be protected, before lawmakers spent the \$4.7 billion it took to divert the Colorado River 336 miles to Phoenix and Tucson.

Mike McCloy may be reached at (602) 444-8111 or at mike.mccloy@pni.com.

Sunday, August 29, 1999 © The Arizona Republic



Lisa Goettsche/Daily News-Sun

A storm rolled through the Valley during the early evening hours Monday, causing flooding on many area streets and downing trees including this one at the 10th hole of South Golf Course in Sun City.

Storm downs trees on SC golf courses

STAFF REPORT

Monday night's storm wasn't the most destructive of this year's monsoon, police and fire officials said. But it was strong enough to knock down a few trees on golf courses and causing water to leak into a Sun City care center.

Water seeped through a construction area at the Sun Valley Lodge, 12415 N. 103rd Ave. in Sun City at about 7 p.m., authorities said.

"It just caused some problems with their fire alarm," said Sun City Fire Battalion Chief Ron Gilbert. "The water was in and out real quick."

Sun City West fire officials said they didn't have any weather-related

calls and there wasn't any damage reported as a result of the storm.

Sun City golf course officials reported minor damage to courses in the area. A tree was knocked down at the South Golf Course, 11000 N. 103rd Ave., and a few limbs were blown from trees at the Willowbrook Golf Course, 10600 Boswell Blvd.

But Sun City West golf courses weren't disturbed by Monday night's storm, a spokesman said.

"We haven't gotten any good rains out here in Sun City West since the second week of July," said Todd Patty, who is in charge of golf course maintenance in Sun City West. "I keep hoping for some rain. We sure could use it."

Daily News-Sun • Thursday, July 5, 2001

Severe storm hits area

DAMAGE SPORADIC: It was hit and miss Tuesday night when a monsoon storm blew through Northwest Valley

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The monsoon storm that ripped its way through parts of the Northwest Valley Tuesday night caused damage to power lines, roofs and golf courses.

The storm, which was classified as "severe" by the National Weather Service had wind gusts as high as 65 mph. In the Sun Cities, unofficial wind readings were lower, but damage was seen at some community property in Sun City.

"We had some minor stuff, such as a tree down here and two trees down there, but nothing major," said Steve Ravenkamp, golf operations manager at the Recreation Centers of Sun City. "The only thing that might be anything is the report of a lightning strike on Riverview (Golf Course) that might have messed up our irrigation computer."

Ravenkamp said workers

are investigating the possible lightning strike, but nothing has been confirmed yet. Workers are also in the process of cleaning up the downed trees at the golf courses.

Sun City Fire Department Battalion Chief Ken Swick said other than what was reported at recreation centers, his department hasn't heard of any damage reports.

"We didn't respond to anything," he said. "Sorry."

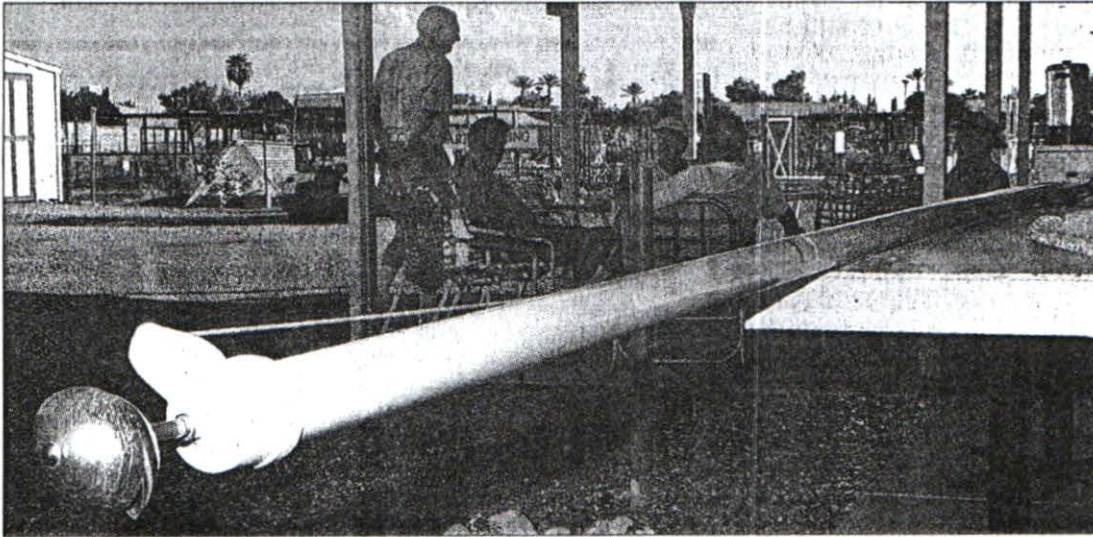
The Sheriff's Posse of Sun City, however, responded to several weather-related calls throughout Tuesday evening according to Posse Commander Wylie Haukland.

"We had a possible lightning strike where a transformer was sparking on 99 Avenue just north of Olive," he said. "Then we had a power line down on the other side of town, which we had close part of Burns Drive for a while."

In addition, the posse has reports of a downed tree and a saguaro cactus at other points during the wind storm.

"It was sporadic throughout the community."

See Storm blows, p. 1



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

The flagpole at the Sun City Agricultural Club was toppled during Tuesday night's monsoon storm.

From A1

Haukland said. "The wind was blowing pretty good, but nothing real big happened."

Sun City West didn't escape from damage either, according to Sun City West Posse officials, but incidents were far fewer than in Sun City. Posse officials report two trees down near the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center.

In all incidents

throughout the communities, no injuries were reported from the storm.

Austin Jamison, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Phoenix, said Tuesday's storm was considered severe in some parts of Arizona, with the Palo Verde Nuclear Power Plant recording wind gusts as strong as 65 mph.

"When the wind gets that high," he said, "it can cause some damage. But

during this time of year it's definitely not uncommon to have those type of gusts."

Jamison said the National Weather Service hasn't received much information about storm damage in the state from Tuesday's storm, as much of it is compiled on a month-to-month basis.

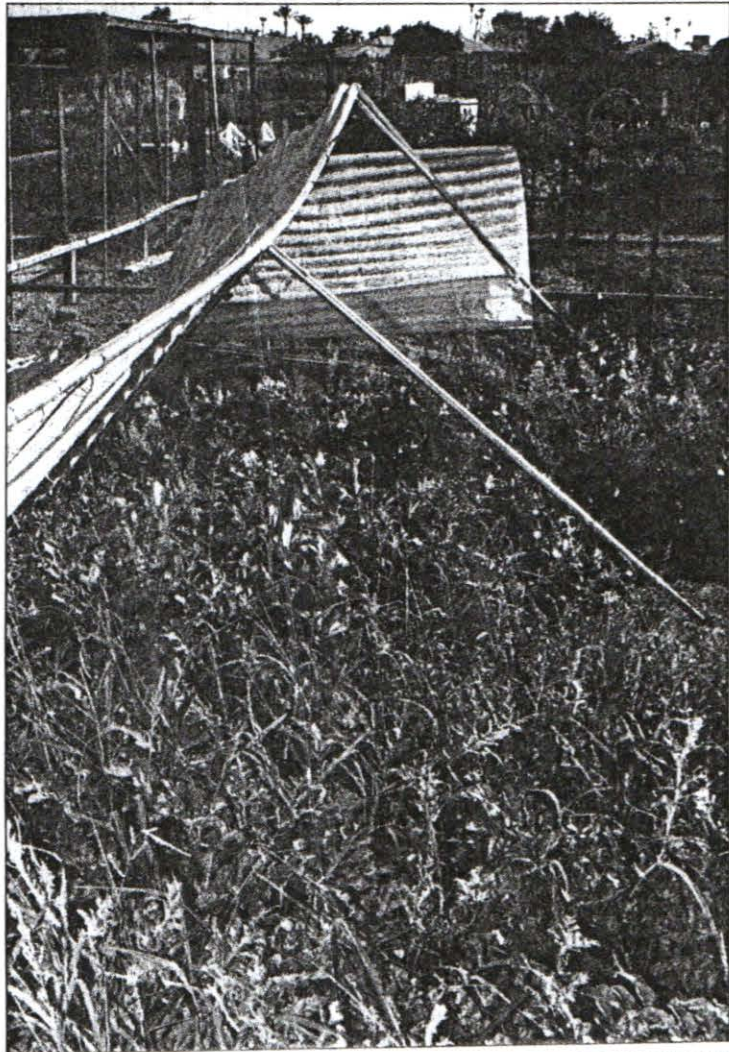
"Most of our reports come from studying newspaper clippings and electric company reports," he said. "But damage is nothing

like the big storm we had here in 1996."

In 1996, a monsoon storm caused extensive damage in the area, with the Deerfield Valley Airport recording wind gusts as high as 115 mph. The 1996 storm caused widespread power outages, flooding and roof damage on many homes in the Northwest Valley.

John Sokolich can be reached at jsokolich@aztrib.com or 876-2526.

(over)



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Wind gusts of up to 65 mph ripped through the Northwest Valley wreaking havoc mostly on trees and small structures such as this shed at the Sun City Agricultural Club plots.

Storm whips NW Valley

DAMAGE MINIMAL: High winds toppled some trees but storm didn't compare to one 5 years to day

JOHN SOKOLICH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Wednesday, Aug. 15, 2001

A fierce storm packing winds of up to 66 mph barreled through the Sun Cities Tuesday, five years to the day that a destructive monsoon ripped off roofs and toppled trees in the Northwest Valley.

Tuesday's storm wasn't as strong as the one five years ago, but it brought back memories to Norman Stevens of Sun City.

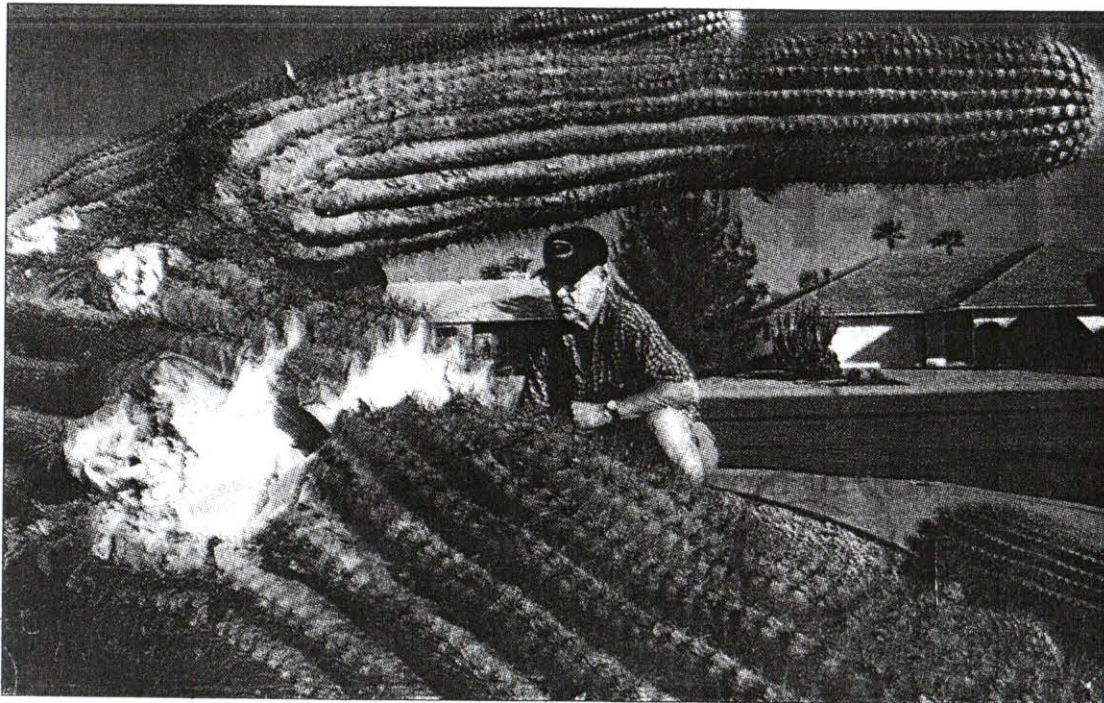
"The wind really was ripping through my yard," Stevens said. "I was worried about my roof, but it turned out to be OK."

Stevens said the 1996 storm damaged a shed in his back yard and tore up his roof. Tuesday night, however, all he lost was a small tree to the wind.

With winds topping out at 66 mph and heavy rains flooding streets and washes, the storm brought widespread minor damage to the area. The force of the winds downed trees and power poles and tore at roofs as storms swept through parts of Arizona.

"There's a lot of damage that people will be cleaning up today," said Mike Andreisen of the National Weather Service. "There was a lot

See Storm blows, A5



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Bob Yates of Sun City West examines a saguaro cactus that toppled in his front yard during Tuesday's storm. He said he looked out the window and saw it standing and a minute later his neighbor knocked on the door and told him it had been blown down. He estimates the cactus was 20 feet high, 2 feet thick and weighed about 5 tons. It had 30 arms of various sizes.



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

In Sun City, Safeway shoppers at Bell Camino shopping center brace to venture into heavy rains Tuesday afternoon.

OVER

Aug. 15, 2001
WEATHER
VF

From A1

of strong wind and some heavy rain, but it's not uncommon for this time of year."

Andreisen said with the increased moisture in the air, it took just a little energy in the clouds to spur such a storm.

"You can tell by the amount of lightning that this storm had a lot of energy," he said. "But as is the norm sometimes, it's the wind that did most of the damage in the Phoenix area and northwest of there."

The National Weather Service in Phoenix reported that nearly an inch of rain poured into washes near the Carefree Highway, flooding the roads and trapping at least one car.

In the Sun Cities, fire crews reported a number of calls, but nothing life threatening.

"We had a few traffic accidents after the initial blow-through of the storm, but nothing too major," said Capt. Chris Bracken of the Sun City Fire Department. "There were lots of reports of lightning strikes at houses, but most turned out to be nothing."

One call in Youngtown and one in Surprise netted some smoke in the attics of houses, but were quickly doused.

In Sun City West, the fire department responded to just one storm-related call for a tree that fell onto a house.

"It didn't do a lot of



JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN

An uprooted palo verde tree fell victim to Tuesday's monsoon as it whipped through Sun City West.

damage, but the residents are probably going to need a landscaper to fix up some of their yard," said Jim Heger, spokesman for the Sun City West Fire Department.

The tree fell on a house near 134th Drive, and was downed because of heavy wind, according to Heger.

Damon Gross, a spokesman for Arizona Public Service co., said 8,000 customers were affected by the outages, but that number was cut in half by early evening.

"We've got about 800 customers still affected, but that's in all areas," he said this morning. "In Sun City, we don't have any reports of people without power."

A recorded message at the Salt River Project stated that there were as many as 4,000 customers affected by power outages in its region, but most were expected to have

their power restored by late last evening.

The Arizona Department of Public Safety reported many accidents on Grand Avenue and Loop 101 in the Northwest Valley because of Tuesday's rain, but none was classified as serious.

Just less than a half inch of rain fell in Sun City Grand, according to Matt Tantillo. The Sun City Agricultural Club measured .38 inches of rainfall.

Heavy rainfall along with wind damage had some Peoria residents concerned for their homes.

"I'm really nervous about any more rain we'll get this week," Jane Harlow of Peoria said Tuesday evening. "There are tiles missing from the roof, and I don't know if that's something that can be fixed so soon."

Aside from the missing

roof tiles and shingles, though, Peoria escaped rather unscathed by the storm.

Mike Tellef, spokesman for the Peoria Fire Department, said the only report he received about damage was one palm tree fire that was sparked by a lightning strike.

"We had a lot of lightning and had a lot of rain, but not any damage that I know about," he said. "No power poles were down either."

In 1996, a storm caused extensive damage in the area, with the Deer Valley Airport recording wind gusts as high as 115 mph. The 1996 storm caused widespread power outages, flooding and roof damage to many homes in the Northwest Valley.

John Sokolich can be reached at jsokolich@aztrib.com or at 876-2526.

COMMUNITY

DAILY NEWS-SUN

SATURDAY, FEB. 15, AND SUNDAY, FEB. 16, 2003

Storm fells cactus, closes roadway

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City and Peoria drivers will want to avoid the intersection of 99th and Olive avenues for the foreseeable future.

Because of Thursday's heavy rains, the Maricopa County Department of Transportation on Friday evening closed the Olive Avenue bridge over the New River at 99th Avenue and sent an engineer out to survey the problem, said Roger Ball, a MCDOT spokesman.

"Water got behind an abutment," Ball said. "We don't know if it will cause structural damage."

The bridge will be closed "indefinitely," Ball said. "The city of Peoria and the sheriff are working out traffic flows."

Until further notice, drivers can cross 99th at Peoria or Northern avenues, Ball said.

Other than the bridge closure, the Sun Cities escaped Thursday's torrent fairly unscathed. About 2 to 3 inches of rain dropped in the

Sun Cities, causing minor flooding on some streets and golf courses, and a few downed saguaros. Fire officials reported light flooding in areas, but otherwise smooth sailing for residents.

The Sun Cities should continue drying out today following the dousing.

Doug Green of the National Weather Service said this morning will bring widespread fog, at times limiting visibility to a quarter mile, but the rest of the day should be partly sunny with highs in the upper 60s.

"There's no mention of precipitation in the forecast," he said.

Some light wind might accompany the day, he added.

A high pressure system moving into the area is responsible for the drier forecast, according to the National Weather Service's forecast.

Tonight will see lows in the mid 40s to lower 50s, with Sunday bringing back upper 60s to near 70-degree weather.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

A rain-soaked giant saguaro cactus fell during Thursday night's storm, damaging the home of Bill and Mary Silvis of Sun City West.

DAILY NEWS-SUN WEDNESDAY, FEB. 26, 2003

Rain storms gardens

WELCOME SOAKING:

Wildflower season looks good, but more brush brings threats of summer fires

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

This week's rain, coupled with the downpour of nearly two weeks ago, should make for a slightly showier wildflower season than last year.

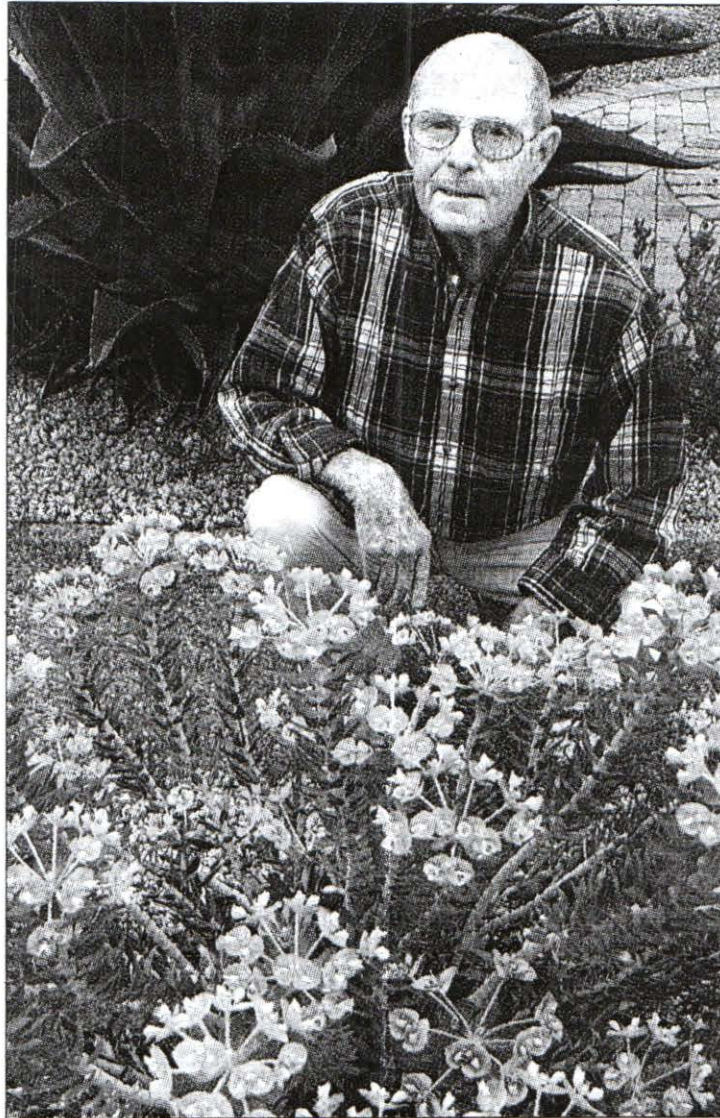
But a new crop of brush has the potential to spark fires in the heat of the summer.

"Basically, it means we should have a very good (wildflower) season," said Master Gardener John Kent of Sun City West. "Every kind of water helps a bit."

Kent said Tuesday's rain was "a wonderful soaking rain" that should help wildflowers and other plants.

"The ones who are doing veggies ... that should be wonderful for them," he said. "It's so good because the irrigation water we use is poor because it's filled with so many salts. This should leach some of the salts out of the roots."

Sam Pryfogle of Avondale, a Master Gardener who helps staff the Master Gardeners office in the Property Owners and Residents Association building in Sun City West, said the rain would have been more helpful a few months ago.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

John Kent, a Master Gardener in Sun City West, says the more rain we get between now and mid-March, the more colorful the wildflowers. The "gopher plant" in front of him will bloom with little red flowers.



CLIMATE INFORMATION FOR PHOENIX

Rainfall:

Average: 0.9 inches
Record: 4.9 inches (1941)

Temperature:

Average high: 75.5 degrees
Lowest high: 49 degrees (1915)
Record high: 100 degrees (1988)
Average low: 48.8 degrees
Highest low: 74 degrees (1986)
Record low: 25 degrees (1966)

Note: Rainfall and temperatures vary widely within the Valley depending on elevation and microclimate.

TO DO LIST FOR MARCH

Prepare garden soil for spring planting, plant seeds and plant transplants.

Continue fertilizing established roses.

Fertilize deciduous fruit trees when they leaf out, and plant citrus trees.

Water landscape plants at least once a month unless rain provides adequate moisture.

Control weeds while they're young and manageable.

Prune frost-sensitive plants like bougainvillea after they begin to leaf out with new spring growth. Apply mulch around the base of plants to conserve moisture and prevent weeds.

DON'T DO LIST FOR MARCH

Do not prune citrus except to remove dead or damaged wood and branches.

Do not use pre-emergent herbicides in areas where you intend to plant seeds.

SOURCE: University of Arizona Cooperative Extension

Daily News-Sun

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"The current rains, as far as the wildflowers go, it'll help them, but the fall rains are the ones that really help," Pryfogle said.

Angelica Elliott, a horticulturist with the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, agreed fall rains are integral to a strong wildflower season. She said about 5 or 6 inches of rain between October and April are necessary to make the desert bloom. "I don't think we've gotten that much," she said.

Elliott said the season likely will be less showy than the colorful spectacle of 2001.

"From the reports I've been getting from other areas like Joshua Tree and Tucson, they're predicting the wildflower season is going to be less spectacular than it was a couple years ago," Elliott said.

"One thing to keep in mind, it might bloom a little bit earlier than usual because in January it got warmer. With this rain, it might help

prolong the bloom," she said.

Leslie Wanek of the National Weather Service said Sun City residents can expect more rainy days ahead. "Basically we're going to be unsettled for the next couple of days because we have another weather system coming in Thursday and then again Saturday," she said.

Sun City weather spotter Jack McCullough said his weather gauge is not working, but has heard reports Sun City received more than an inch in the last 24 hours.

"This is a great help, but it's not enough," he said. "We need a lot more because everything was deleted.

Sun City West in the last 24 hours received 1.21 inches of rain, and weather



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Marianne Fitsimons walks her trio of dogs along Sun City Boulevard. She says she doesn't mind the rain because she's visiting from the Midwest, where it's a much colder rain.

spotter Bob Hunt said while it rained hard at times, there were enough lulls to prevent any problems.

Wanek said weather patterns tend to shift every three months or so, and the Valley was having unseasonable warm, dry weather, so it was due for a wet spell.

The rains should help wildflowers spring up in the desert, she said. "I would think that if we continue to get some rain like this, if the next week or so remains active and it starts to heat up, yeah, I would think that would help them," she said.

The height of wildflower season is March through April, Pryfogle said, but some wildflowers already have cropped up. Kent said some of the better places to view the desert in bloom include

the Seven Springs area in Tonto National Forest of Central Arizona, and Picacho Peak in southern Arizona, among others.

Wildflowers aside, the recent rains have other impacts, good and bad.

Sun City West Fire Marshal Jim Heger said rather than lower the risk of fire, the recent rains actually heighten the brush fire danger.

"It might even make it worse because it's going to promote brush growth," he said. "It's a potential for our northern area above Deer Valley Drive."

The fine grasses and brush are the fuel that carries and spreads brush fires, he said, and winter rains promote that growth. Residents in Sun City West and other communities that border the

desert should be careful once this brush dries up with the summer heat.

"Cigarette butts are the main one," Heger said.

This week's rain has a bright side, though. Residents can turn off their irrigation systems and save a bit of water.

"Right now with the rain, you really don't need to water anything," Pryfogle said. "If we get a good rain like we did a week and a half ago, you shut off your water and let things dry out a little."

The rain so far hasn't been enough to pull the Valley out of its drought, Pryfogle said. "We need probably a good rain like this for quite a while," he said. "We need to fill the reservoirs up is the main thing."

Katy O'Grady can be reached at 876-2514 or kogrady@aztrib.com.

Winter storm clobbers Northwest Valley

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A thunderstorm poured into the Sun Cities and Northwest Valley Thursday afternoon, dumping rain and hail and flooding dozens of streets.

Leslie Grace and his wife, Ardis, were rescued by several Good Samaritans at 105th Avenue and Mountain View after their car stalled in a storm ditch. The Sun City winter visitors were stalled in a 3-foot "pool."

"I didn't know how in the heck we were going to get out of there," Ardis said.

When the couple's 2001 Chevrolet Impala quit, water began to seep through the floorboards, and the current

pushed the car backward.

"We sat there because it was too deep to get out," Leslie said. "There wasn't much that neither she or I could do at that point."

Several people in the area noticed the couple in distress and sprung into action. More than five people helped push the Nebraska couple's car out of the water.

"Everyone was very friendly and nice enough to help us when we needed them," he said.

The Graces were on their way to a potluck at First United Methodist Church when the car stalled. After the group of people pushed them to safety, they decided to go home instead.

"It was all over by the time

we finally got out of that water," Leslie said.

Two to three blocks away, residents opened their doors to a scene reminiscent of Flagstaff bathed in snow.

Joy Szela couldn't believe her neighborhood looked like a winter wonderland in March. The Sun Citian remembers the rain pounding on the roof of her home.

Then, the Pittsburgh native looked out her window to find the yard flooded and hail covering the ground.

"I just didn't expect this," she said with a laugh. "I moved here to get away from the cold weather."

Szela, who lives on Peoria

Avenue between 103rd and 107th avenues, said she was excited about the sight, as were her neighbors, who dashed for cameras and recorders to capture the rare moment.

"Before I knew it," she said, "everyone was taking photos, and I didn't have any film."

About 1.16 inches of rain were reported for the area at Phoenix International Airport, according to Dave Houk, senior meteorologist at AccuWeather.

The storm originated in Northern California and moved south into Arizona. It's now heading east, leaving snow in its wake.

Houk said the weather will warm up from 58 degrees to the high 70s and low 80s with plenty of sunshine.

"The lousy weather is finally over with," he said.

Detective Scott Bailey, spokesman for the Surprise Police Department, said eight cars were stranded in a flood at Cactus and Reems roads. Fire officials rescued the people from their vehicles, and there were no injuries.

"The water was almost up to their windows," he said.

None of the Sun Cities, Youngtown, Peoria or Glendale had any reported incidents.

Sunshine and warm weather were what Klaus Dilger expected when he flew into Arizona from Germany to visit his aunt, Doris Fitzpatrick of Sun City.

"I arrived here in the Valley of the Sun to relax, play golf and swim but never thought this," he said.

The man then took out his video camera to film the storm for his friends and family.

"They would never believe me in Germany if I told them this happened," he said. "I needed some type of proof to show them ... It looks like snow."



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Eleanor Johnson, a winter visitor from Fremont, Mich., sweeps hail from her driveway near 107th and Peoria avenues after a thunderstorm Thursday. "I never thought I'd have to do this in Sun City," she said.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

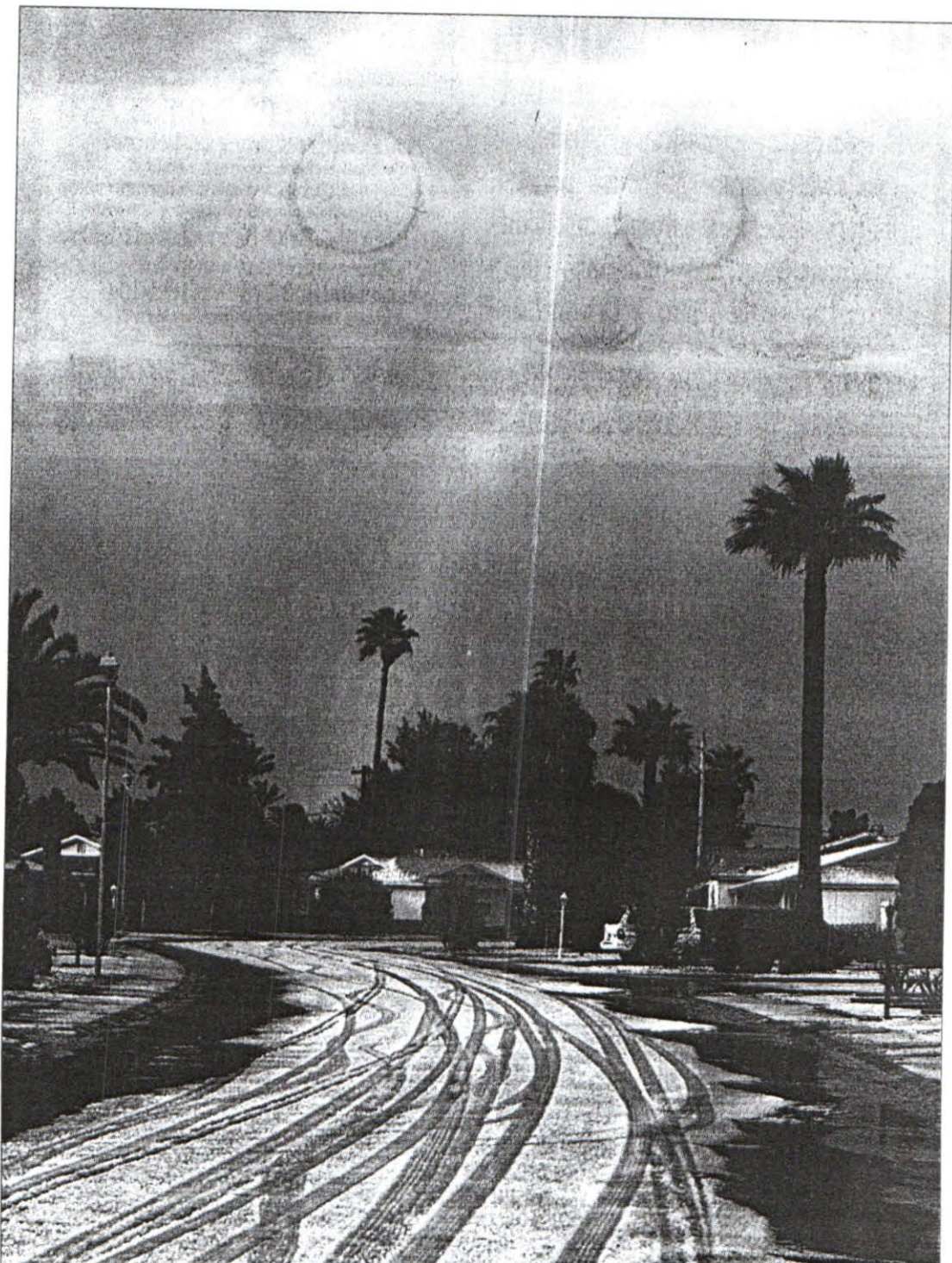
It could be a scene from Flagstaff if not for the palm trees and saguaros, after a thunderstorm dumped hail on Sun City south of Grand Avenue Thursday afternoon.

OVER



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

An unidentified good Samaritan climbs from the Jeep to help Dr. Leslie and Ardis Grace, winter visitors from Blair, Neb., whose car got stuck Thursday in the rushing water at Mountain View and 105th Avenue in Sun City.



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

A rainbow appears in the northeast sky over a hail-covered street near 103rd and Peoria avenues during a lull in a thunderstorm Thursday afternoon.