

Print staffer relates water woes

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Staff Writer

I woke up to the typical "Oregon" day...RAIN. Nothing unusual right? Sure, that's what I thought.

I made my usual efforts to try and make it to school on time. The day was following its ever-so-monotonous routine, until I got the call. The call, had it been a few hours later, would have been devastating.

I was told, with as much hesitation as possible, that we had a "water problem." Of course I was picturing the ever so famous scenes on all the news stations and had these envisions that my house had floated away, or it was but an island in the midst of an underwater world. But how could that be? We didn't have any rivers or creeks nearby, or at least the ones God had placed there in the beginning. We had our own waterfront property but not by choice.

The situation was not as dramatic as I was thinking, but could have been, had we not noticed until the usual time we got home. Our problem was ground water. Somehow we ended up with everyone's runoff water, and it was being retained by our house and rising through the heater vents and cold air returns.

By the time I left school, missing my next two classes, and got home, my dad had gotten a sump pump, but no sooner did we get it set up and plugged in-the

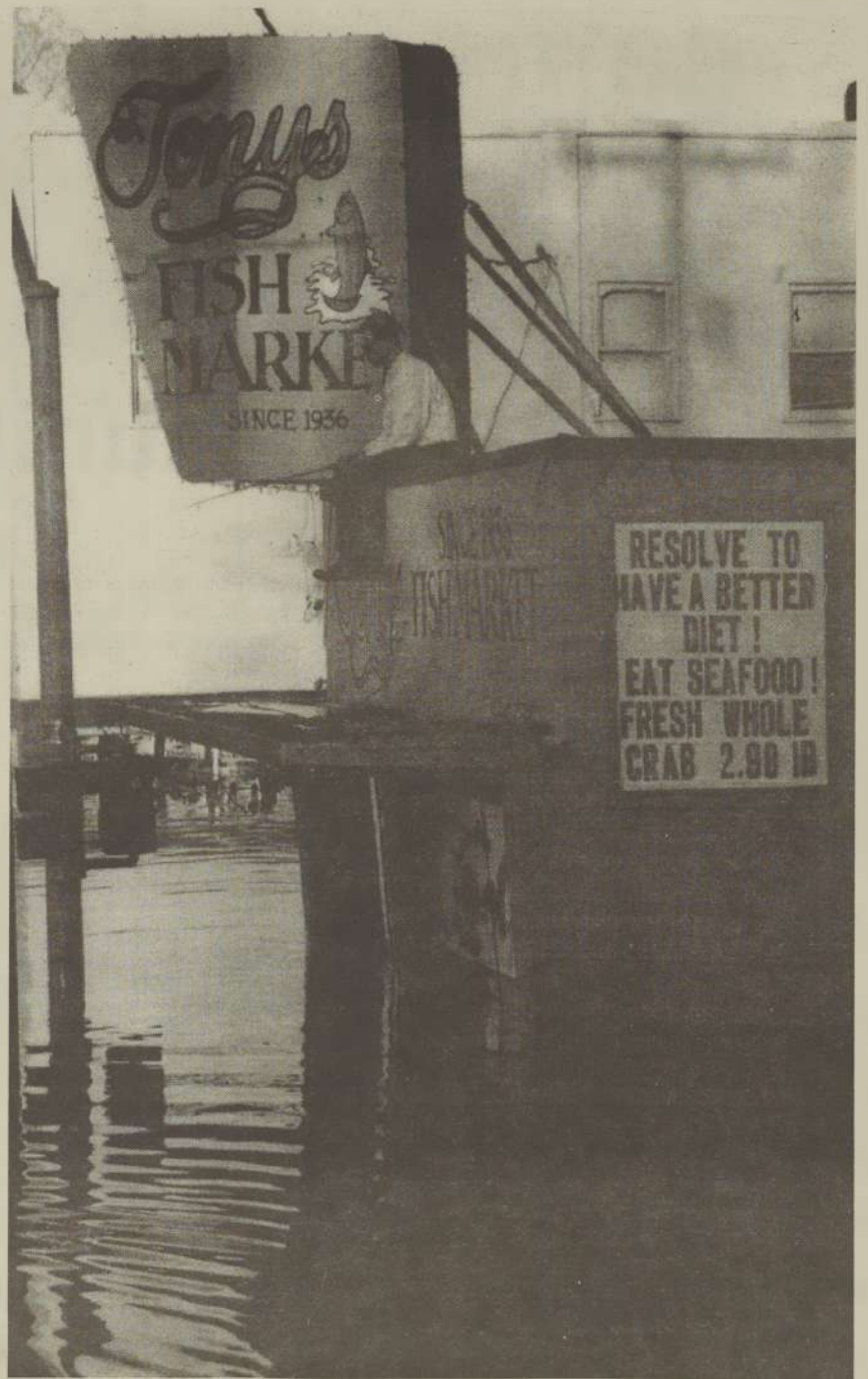
power went out. It seemed a futile attempt towards everything we tried. Finally we acquired a generator and that solved that problem, but created another as water was entering faster than we could remove it.

In that short time, the sight outside turned from a typical rainfall to a torrential downpour and it was as if we had our own little moat surrounding our saturated house. It was essential that we find another means to extract the water, so I had to go into town and get piping supplies and such to increase the ability and amount of water exiting.

For the next couple of hours, we uneasily looked down the vents watching the water levels, listening for encouragement that the pumping would show some effect, which it did. By nightfall, we felt comfortable enough to go to sleep. With the fear of overflowing and the constant sound of the pumps, I slept on the couch and still am.

All over and hopefully done with, we were of the fortunate few. Our situation was hardly a comparison in the fact that we hardly had any material losses, as far as we know, and we at least were able to challenge the situation, while others were only victims.

Regardless of our strengths and abilities, nature always has the strong-arm advantage.



Making it home safely...

Vicki Welch
Copy Editor

Last Wednesday I went to class as usual. After classes I usually take the bus home; Wednesday was no different.

However, the rain, snow and ice changed the beautiful countryside into a flooded, grey and murky world. With every mile, we passed overflowing ditches, waterlogged fields and rivers that were spilling past their banks.

We forded several new waterways. When we reached the rivers that had flooded the highway, we waited, anxiously, to cross, slowly and cautiously, to the other side. Several people stood by trying to stop the water from getting into their houses. They tried, unsuccessfully, to keep water out of their machines and cars.

As the bus was higher than the surrounding cars, the water didn't get us quite as wet. The water still roared past and splashed noisily at the sides of the bus.

As we reached our bus stops, we all let out sighs of relief. We were glad to be safe and close to home.

When I finally got home that evening, I realized that there was someone else that would have to ford those same rivers. My mother! I waited anxiously for her to come home, as safely as I had.

When she finally got home an hour later than usual and two hours after I got home, she told me that the waters had been twice as high as when I went through. The water had been threatening to seep in through the windows and the seams of her car, as well as splashing the windows.

Now that the water has finally started to recede, I am thankful that so few people have been seriously hurt due to the flood and the other storms. I feel sorry for the people who have lost loved ones and friends. I hope each of us has learned something from this experience and that we can share what we have learned.



Photos by Cori Kargel, Karin Redston, Chad Patteson, Paul Ulmen, Tarah Nimz, Toni DePeel

