



PHOTO COURTESY OF APRIL SEXTON, LONDON SCHOOL OFFICE MANAGER



PHOTO COURTESY OF DONALD BURTON

Left: The original one-room school house with the geodesic art dome in the background. "This picture depicts London's commitment, despite the conditions, to teaching old-school values with modern quality education," said London School Office Manager April Sexton.

Above: Volunteers from the Christian Aid Ministries Disaster Response Service spent time in Cottage Grove in the days following the snowstorm, meeting each morning at The Koffee Kup before breaking off into groups with lists of people to help. Among them was the Polgars, located way up Abbet Lane north of Cottage Grove.

Stories from A1

front of the school, he said, "The reason we didn't do that again is because it got destroyed immediately."

Though he's proud of this year's accomplishment, James doesn't think he'll continue the tradition.

"This is the last one," he

laughed. "That was way too much work."

Rural Rescue

April Klein woke up Monday morning after the storm to find that snow effectively walled in the little Dorena street of Sallee Road.

"We were buried," Klein said. "It was probably 18 to 24 inches of snow just mounded and fro-

zen in the road and driveway."

Some households on the street had generators, though, and neighbors worked together to clear debris, share water and check on each other, but by Wednesday there was still too much snow on the street for smaller cars to get out.

"You couldn't even get out of your driveway to get to the store, to go to work, to go into

town to get water if you needed it — nothing," said Klein.

Residents pooled together some money and posted a plea on Facebook for someone to plow the area.

"We had a couple of folks interested on Facebook, but they said it would be another day or so," said Klein, "and then this guy in a white truck and trailer with a John Deere on the back with a blade on it — we saw him driving up and down road."

The man stopped once to ask Sallee Road neighborhood boys if they needed help, "but they didn't realize what he was asking and they said, 'no,'" laughed Klein.

However, on another pass, one of the neighbors caught the driver's attention.

"It turned out he had just driven from Harrisburg and just wanted to help people," said Klein.

Some young men jumped out of the truck with the driver and began pushing and scooping snow from the street and driveways.

Klein estimates about 17 to 20 people were stuck on that road. "It freed everybody," she said. "It was just such a nice thing."

"One of the first questions people asked was, 'How much do you charge?'" said Gene Hursh, the driver of the truck. "Well at that point we weren't charging anything — we were just looking to get people help."

Hursh, a Harrisburg resident, is a grass seed farmer and owns acreage in the Creswell and Cottage Grove area. After checking on his crops, he realized how badly people in the area needed help.

"I have equipment to do the job and I thought, well, I'll go down and see where I can start," he said. "So I just started knocking on doors."

He and his nephews worked their way down Row River Road, past Dorena, looking for houses which seemed snowed in and offering their services to surprised residents.

Hursh cleared the road for about "about a dozen or more"

houses all together, he said, working both Wednesday and Thursday to help people as far as Pleasant Hill. One family in particular, Hursh remembered, had no electricity or even a wood heating system.

"They were really cold," he said. "They were very grateful to be able to get out of there and get back into town."

Klein expressed her appreciation for living in an area with such community spirit. "It's just amazing," she said. "The community and the support and people coming together and helping each other. It's just been incredible."

Some of that appreciation, expectedly, was reserved for Hursh.

"It was a big impact for our tiny little area," Klein said. "He didn't want any money, but of course we paid for his efforts."

Do you have a Snowstoem 2019 story to share? Email us at nhickson@cgsentinel.com or dsherwood@cgsentinel.com.



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