



A Report by the North Dakota Community Foundation



Some awakened to the noise of water flowing across fields to farms and towns. Others worked for weeks to prepare sandbag and earthen dikes — in some cases, to realize, as the water rose ever higher, their herculean efforts were not going to stem the floodtide.

This is the story of the North Dakota Community Foundation's participation in combating a natural disaster of unprecedented magnitude in our state: the Flood of '97. More than that, it is the story of all those who so generously sent gifts to assist in the recovery and rebuilding in the Red River Valley — and a full accounting of how gifts like yours directly helped people affected by the flood.

Established at the request of North Dakota Governor Edward T. Schafer, the North Dakota Community Foundation's 1997 Flood Relief Fund effort sprang into action as the Red River wreaked havoc in its course northward. Governor Schafer was getting calls from across the country with offers to help — and he chose the Foundation as the vehicle best able to handle the gifts of cash to be used in the Red River Valley. Senators Byron L. Dorgan and Kent Conrad and Congressman Earl Pomeroy also directed donors to the '97 Flood Relief Fund.

Within 24 hours of the governor's request, eight additional phone lines were installed, an 800 number and credit card account were in place, and volunteers — including North Dakota's First Lady, Nancy Jones-Schafer — were on hand to answer the literally thousands of calls from people all across the country who wanted to help.

Whenever a donation is given, the big question always remains, "How much of my gift will go for the cause?" Thanks to grants from the Otto Bremer Foundation and the Northwest Area Foundation, which covered the extraordinary administrative costs associated with the flood relief effort — as well as AT&T's donation of its 800 services — we are happy to report that 100% of your gifts went directly to flood relief.

This report is not a solicitation for additional gifts. Instead, it is a thank you to you and thousands of others whose generosity helped the people of the Red

River Valley recover and rebuild after the flood. These are some of their stories. We hope you will find our efforts worthy of the trust you placed in us.

> Kevin Dvorak, President North Dakota Community Foundation December 1997





One Foundation's Response to Disaster

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by Kevin Dvorak, North Dakota Community Foundation

Horrific pictures: aerial views of almost nothing but water covering fields and town ... lines of exhausted floodfighters desperately raising sandbag dikes higher ... the awful sight of downtown Grand Forks in flames, the fire reflected in dark floodwaters

Images of spring flooding up and down the Red River Valley in North Dakota and Minnesota have faded from the headlines. But they have not faded so easily from memory, and will not do so any time soon. Many people affected by the flood are still living in temporary housing, trying to get their lives back together, wrestling with decisions to sell or rebuild. City officials are looking at the best ways to protect their communities in the future. As the first snows fall, no one who lived through the flood can help wondering, "What about next year?"

At the North Dakota Community Foundation, we, too, have unforgettable memories of our own floodfight. Our response to this event of overwhelming magnitude was a task unprecedented in our organization. This is our story.

Although I live 200 miles from the Red River, I was in my hometown of Minto, North Dakota, on April 19, 1997, celebrating my sister's 50th birthday. Sitting 10 miles west of the Red River, I watched the local news in horror that evening, as the incredible fight put up by the residents of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks — just 30 miles south of us came to an end. Roiling water inundated the two communities as dikes broke.

To illustrate the flood's force, let me relate that many people had installed threaded plugs in basement sewer drains. When they returned to their homes after

the waters had subsided, many of the plugs were missing. They were soon found — imbedded in basement ceilings. Sewer backup occurred with such force, it stripped the threads on the plugs, shooting them into the ceilings as if from a cannon.

Everyone in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks — some 56,000 residents was evacuated, many with little more than the clothes on their backs. In a state of just 630,000 people, about 8% of the population became refugees overnight. Power was shut off. Grand Forks' water treatment plant was flooded. Words and pictures could never do justice to the overwhelming sense of disaster.

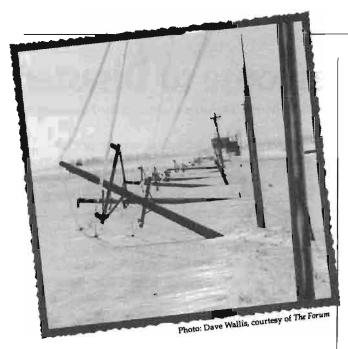
As I drove home the next day, thoughts of what the North Dakota Community Foundation could or should do were racing through my mind. I wanted to be sensitive to the efforts of the traditional relief organizations (the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, FEMA), who were responding quickly and doing wonderful things. I didn't want to detract from their hard work and fund-raising efforts. But the images of catastrophe were constant reminders that still more help would be needed.

Next morning, my assistant, Valerie Bren, and I were discussing the Foundation's role in all this when we received a call from Governor Schafer's office. Would the Community Foundation set up a designated fund for flood relief and recovery? The governor's request included an 800 number, phone bank and credit card option for donations. Within 24 hours, all these things were in place, and volunteers filled our office to answer the phones.

On that first day, I spoke with Jane Nober and Amy Fackleman of the Council on Foundations, both of whom responded with a wealth of information concerning

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disaster relief efforts by community foundations. I also contacted colleagues at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation, Sonoma County (California) Community Foundation and The Foundation Serving Coastal Carolina to ask for advice. Their information about their own response to tragedies was immensely helpful.

As the disaster in the Valley continued to unfold and volunteers accepted donations, I studied the materials so generously offered by my colleagues. I wanted to be prepared for the eventual requests I knew would come, and I wanted the Foundation to meet the incredible needs, legally and effectively.

At our annual meeting on April 24, board member George Cox accepted the leadership role as Chairman of the Board. A Grand Forks resident, George had been out of his house for nearly a week and was physically and emotionally exhausted. Yet he attended the meeting in Bismarck and his work in the Foundation's relief efforts has been critical to our success.

As part of that successful response, the North Dakota Community Foundation took these important steps:

• Established the '97 Flood Relief Fund at the request of the governor, making

grants for flood relief and rebuilding

- Established an 800 number with free service from AT&T — to accept donations, and added eight phone lines to handle call volume
- Asked for and received grants from the Otto Bremer Foundation and the Northwest Area Foundation to help with the extraordinary expenses related to the flood effort – allowing 100% of donors' gifts to go directly to flood relief
- Accepted a donation from AFLAC to pay insurance premiums of AFLAC policy holders affected by flooding
- Worked with Grand Forks/East Grand Forks officials to set up and administer the \$20 million "Angel Fund"

In the course of these actions, the following important funds were also established through our Foundation:

- Greater Grand Forks Flood Relief Fund, also called the "Mayor's Fund," to make grants in the Grand Forks area
- Red River Radio Rescue Fund, a national radio appeal for flood relief
- Cops Helping Cops Relief Fund, to accept donations from law enforcement agencies around the country to help officers who worked through the disaster, even as their own homes were being flooded
- Help Your Farm Neighbor Relief Fund, to assist farmers and ranchers who suffered devastating losses from the severe winter and spring flooding
- Telephone and Electric Co-op Employee Relief Fund, to help co-op employees affected by the winter blizzards and spring flood

Through all this, the generosity of people across the country astounded me. While images of disaster remained strong in my mind, they were softened, a little, by a sea of faces — the imagined faces of all those who called, seeking ways to lend a hand to strangers in need.



In Role Reversal, Community 'Glad to Turns to Local Mission for Help with Housing, Food Give Back'

Even those without homes lost something in the flood in Grand Forks. Located in the downtown area inundated by the floodwaters of the Red River, the Grand Forks Mission – a shelter for up to 100 homeless people and a soup kitchen for mission residents and others in need – suffered extensive damage.

When mission interim director Marie Rose arrived in Grand Forks in June, about six weeks after the flood, she found the building's eight residents without hot water, heat or food.

Deemed unsafe, an old church building housing the mission's kitchen, dining room and thrift store had to be torn down. Three dormitories were also lost to flooding. But Rose's first task was to call in a crew to get the hot water running.

"The guys were out working, helping clean up, all day," she says, "and they had no hot showers. We fixed that first."

For six months, the National Guard cooked and transported food to the

mission, which housed more people as they returned to the community. A \$50,000 grant from the North Dakota Community Foundation went a long way toward funding repairs, but with everyone in Grand Forks in almost the same boat, it was hard to schedule contractors. By the time new boilers for heating were finally installed in late October, "it was getting pretty cold," recalls Rose.

In December, the kitchen rebuilding project was finally completed. Hot meals are now served again in the mission's new dining room.

Since the flood, those served at the mission have been a mixture, Rose says. Low-income housing in Grand Forks took a real hit, with many who lost apartments or homes staying at the shelter. Other residents came to Grand Forks for some of the many jobs available in clean-up and rebuilding efforts. Still others are chronically homeless people, unable for various reasons to provide their own housing.

Those staying at the mission are required to look for work, and with all the clean-up work available, 80 to 90% have been working — a very high percentage, Rose points out.

"The work is definitely out there," she comments. And mission residents, she adds, are very supportive, hard workers.

Rose was touched by one resident, homeless before the flood, whose compassion went to those who had actually lost their homes. The things he had lost, although they were his, were of little value, the man said; they wouldn't be difficult to replace. It was different for

Mission (cont'd on page 11)

Ten Days After Flood, Nursery Offers Free Services to Returning Families

Five-year-old Mara was happy to see her friends and teachers again, when her family returned to Grand Forks about six weeks after the floodwaters receded.

Mara was able to get back to the day of learning and playtime she was used to, thanks to a \$50,000 grant from the North Dakota Community Foundation that helped United Day Nursery, Inc., reopen – albeit in a variety of temporary locations just ten days after the flood ended. That was a huge help to families who needed to immediately focus



on the task of cleaning up and rebuilding, says United Day Nursery director Suzie Thorson.

"It was nice to get her back to some structure," says Mara's mother, Jodie Storhaug. "It was good to return to something normal for her, too."

At home, like most families, the Storhaugs were hard-pressed to give their children a sense of normalcy after the flood. The Storhaugs were busy cleaning their flooded basement, as well as going back to work. Bruce Storhaug did business from the home for a while. Seven-year-old Kaia often stayed with him during the day, since her own daycare didn't reopen until August.

Normally housed in United Lutheran Church, United Day Nursery lost its use of the church's large kitchen and lunchroom, which were completely flooded. It also lost an area planned for

> Spectrum, a new program to care for approximately 50 children.

In the midst of wondering how the daycare would rebuild, Thorson received a call from a local childcare resource agency. A Lutheran Social Services grant would cover the cost of providing childcare. Could United reopen, providing free childcare to flood victims?

Just ten days d just that,

after the flood, United did just that, housed first at the city's Head Start program, then at vearious elementary schools which had received less damage. Although many had to commute from out of town — Thorson and her family spent a month at her sister's in Gilby, about 30 miles away — all but two teachers returned to their jobs with United Day Nursery.

"It was a little crazy," chuckles Thorson. "We had 240 kids, ages two through six. But it was really needed."

Meanwhile, the daycare's permanent space at United Lutheran underwent major repairs, finally



reopening again in mid-August and celebrating with a "coming home" parade of children through the halls. A makeshift kitchen and lunchroom now feed the 200 or so children enrolled at the nursery; a new kitchen will be built this winter. The large Spectrum area, new bathrooms and a sprinkler system are also underway.

All these projects total around \$250,000, paid for through generous grants from foundations, agencies and individual donors.

Without those funds, "I honestly don't know if we would be here," states Thorson.

"Receiving those gifts was the only way it was possible to even think about [the future]," she adds. "We did not know how we were going to get the money to get going again."

Thorson wants to make sure all who gave receive a heartfelt message of thanks.

"They have been a blessing," she says. "Just tell them: they have been such a blessing."

Volunteers

Below is a list of those volunteers who left their names with us; we are sure there are a few we may have missed. To all our volunteers in the flood relief effort, we offer a heartfelt "thank you." We couldn't have done it without you.

Gerry MacMartin Rose Reinbold **Darlene** Turitto Cheryl Stockert Karen Kelsch Kay Schwartz Nancy Jones-Schafer Jans Seiffert Patsy Thompson Bev Zink **Rose Espeland** Audre Goll Laura Lange Beth Dvorak Ilene Larson Juleen Cunningham Math & Maggie Gross Lorrie Giese Lu & Rolland Haux Sue Howard Dorotheia Hoerner

Mike Marum Connie & Darryl McQuay Wendy Schweitzer Carole Miller Josi O'Connor Debby Barth Joanne Ottmar Karen Baggenstoss Gloria Olson Lois Borke Mel & Marion Brandt Betty Neuhardt Cory Fong Casey John Dvorak Wally & Betty Owens Tara Holt Cammy Lynch Alana Dvorak Melinda Schirado **Cindy Bittner** Vern Wagner

Individual Gifts Given Directly to Flood Victims



We are proud to report that, of the literally thousands of individual gifts to the Flood Relief Fund, 100% went to flood relief directly assisting individuals and families.

Flood Relief '97 received a total of \$1.79 million in funding, including corporate and foundation aid that helped cover operating expenses for various agencies involved in the flood relief effort. More than \$400,000 – more than equaling the amount from individual donors – was given to individuals in the form of direct assistance grants.

Agencies Work to Identify Needs — and Find Resources to Take Care of Them

Devastating. If you were in Grand Forks – and some other Red River Valley communities – shortly after the flood, you'd have seen homes with doors open blankly in an attempt to dry the air and get rid of the smells of water, mildew, fuel oil and sewage. You'd have noticed water lines high on the outside walls of some homes. Businesses boarded up. And boulevards – for block after block after block – piled head-high with trash.

Losses from the Flood of '97 are difficult to comprehend. From a flooded home, with the accumulated possessions of more than 30 years, one Grand Forks family salvaged: two plastic shelving units, one metal drawer unit, four metal lockers, three metal file cabinets, yard equipment and a router.

Families like that one are often swallowing a lot of pride as they ask for the help they need to rebuild their lives.

"The people being helped are some who have never had to ask for anything before," writes Joan Edwards, disaster response coordinator for Catholic Family Services, based in Fargo, N.D. "It is very humbling for them."

Expected to take at least two years, the rebuilding and recovery process in the Red River Valley has involved many agencies working together to refer affected families to the services they need.

Catholic Family Services, for example, has banded together with Lutheran Disaster Response, the United Methodist Committee on Relief and the Salvation Army to form the Resource Agencies Flood Team. These organizations have jointly employed a case management coordinator, who oversees a dozen case managers in the Grand Forks area, employed by the separate agencies. These case managers coordinate with all the agencies to get the help families need. If financial needs are greater than one agency's limit, for example, agencies may combine financial or other resources (sometimes including building supplies or work crews) to assist the client.

When the caps of all these agencies are met, or financial resources are depleted, the group turns to the Upper Red River Valley Unmet Needs Committee, which is using a \$50,000 grant from the North Dakota Community Foundation. This committee is dedicated to bringing together resources for meeting the essential living needs of individuals and families.

While many families are back in their homes up and down the Valley, there are still unmet needs, points out Edwards.

"This is a different phase" of recovery, she says. Some families, for example, have past-due utility bills and face the threat of a power cut-off just as winter sets in. Others are back in homes or apartments, but still replacing "basics" such as cribs and beds, mattresses and sheets. Still others require supplies for rebuilding, or equipment that will allow them to continue the work they did before the flood.

Those stories have become commonplace, acknowledges Clay Myers-Bowman, director of the Disaster Resource Project sponsored by the Village Family Service Center. The project's flood relief efforts are two-pronged: FEMA-funded crisis counseling for flood victims, and consumer credit counseling and general counseling through the Village's regular staff and programs.



Less than a week after floods hit the northern Red River Valley in late April, these programs were in place. Three mobile offices are used for counseling throughout the Valley - not only helping individuals, but building relationships with community and county officials, many of whom were themselves affected by flooding. And a \$50,000 grant from the North Dakota Community Foundation a "no-strings-attached" gift that has enabled the Village to help "wherever it's needed," according to Myers-Bowman has helped more than 100 families, who receive individual grants based on their needs.

Those needs "run the gamut," says Myers-Bowman, who notes that the project has so far helped renters and homeowners, ranchers and farmers, single parents, construction workers and more.

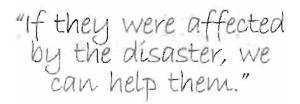
"What is unique is that there are no boundaries," observes the director. "If they were affected by the disaster, we can help them."

With systems in place to identify and meet needs, the Village's project is also focusing on helping neighborhoods and communities organize to create plans for dealing with future disasters, and to support one another.

"If people pull together, those benefits will be felt for decades," Myers-Bowman says.



Photo: Colburn Hvidston III, courtesy of The Forum



These are just a few of the stories of people helped by the Village's Disaster Resource Project:

- One elderly woman required a new roof, sheetrocking, cupboards, wiring and furnace, thanks to severe damage caused by April's blizzard and flood. She received \$1,000 to assist with these costs.
- His farm flooded four times, this man's furnace and electrical equipment were destroyed, and his sewage and drainage systems suffered heavy damage. The farmer received \$1,600 to help pay off current debts as flood expenses consumed his income. Team members also helped with FEMA applications and clean-up resources.
- Spring flooding that put fields under water took away a farm laborer's income. With wages reduced, he and his wife received \$500 to help with car payments — and were assisted by the Village's debt management program.
- One Grand Forks man worked all night to fight the flood. Returning to his home at 2 a.m., he managed to salvage one laundry basket of clothes from his flooded building. He used \$450 in flood-relief funding to pay off debts, then got "back on track" through the debt management program.

Grants + Projects

Ada Minn		
Ada, Minn. Bridges Medical Services Foundation	n \$50,000	
Funding for hospital & nursing home		
damaged in flood	extensivery	
Alvarado, N.D.		
	\$10,000	
Alvarado Volunteer Fire Dept. Pay for expenses related to assisting G		
Bismarck, N.D.	funu forks	
	tion \$10,000	
March of Dimes Birth Defects Founda	tion \$10,000	
Replace Grand Forks office Breckenridge, Minn.		
United Methodist Church	\$49,000	
"Lend a Helping Hand" operations &	urect	
assistance for unmet needs		
Drayton, N.D.	¢1 F 000	
Drayton Park Board	\$15,000	
Replace public restroom & concession	stana	
destroyed in flood		
East Grand Forks, Minn.		
Community Christian Reformed Ch		
Replace childcare equipment and mini		
East Grand Forks Campbell Library	\$16,000	
Replace videos checked out by families		
and lost in flood		
East Grand Forks Education Foundat		
Enhance educational needs & opportur	iities for	
teachers and students affected by flood		
East Grand Forks Senior Citizens Ce	nter \$12,000	
Repair center to its pre-flood condition		
First Lutheran Church	\$10,000	
Replace equipment & repair daycare fac	cility	
Good Samaritan Center	\$50,000	
Senior & handicapped transportation		
Heritage Foundation of East Grand Forks \$16,000		
Replace public address system destroyed in flood		
Independent School District No. 595	\$16,000	
Equipment for computer labs in		
new & rebuilt schools		
Options Interstate Resource Center	\$50,000	
Replace equipment & furnishings	, _ ,	
River Heights Lutheran Preschool	\$14,000	
Repair daycare facility	+ - -,	
Sacred Heart Schools	\$25,000	
Flood repairs to school	4	
Fargo, N.D.		
Catholic Family Service	\$50,000	
Direct assistance to flood victims for un	amet needs	
Catholic Family/North Dakota Disas	ter	
Recovery Coordinating Team	\$60,000	
Provide direct financial aid to individua		
affected by flood		
Fargo Public Schools/Trollwood		
Performing Arts School	\$13,500	
Replace structure lost in flood	410,500	
Lutheran Social Services of N.D.	\$10,000	
Replace Grand Forks office furniture &		
North Dakota 4-H Foundation	\$5,000	
Youth development programs for flood victims		
Oak Grove Lutheran High School		
Oak Grove Lutheran High School	\$25,000	
Flood repair costs		

Southeastern N.D. Unmet Needs Committee	\$35,000
Provide direct assistance for unmet needs	AFO 000
Village Family Service Center	\$50,000
Client Assistance Fund for direct assistance	
Village Family Service Center	\$10,000
Office rent for flood relief efforts	
Grand Forks, N.D.	
ArtWise	\$20,000
Artist salaries for two years	
Belmont Baby Care	\$10,000
Financial assistance & lease of temporary but	ilding
Cafe Kosmos, Inc. & Cultural	0
Center for Teens	\$47,000
Remodel location & purchase equipment	4 ,
Center for Innovation & Business	
Development Foundation	\$29,100
Make direct contact with businesses to asses	
Community Violence Intervention Center	
Repair shelter house & office	\$30,000
Dakota Science Center	\$20,000
Obtain temporary location for center	
Grand Forks Christian School	\$25,000
Replace book shelves & office equipment lost	in flood
Grand Forks Foundation for Education	\$50,000
Disaster grants for 19 Grand Forks public sc	
Grand Forks Master Chorale	\$5,500
Replace lost music, clothing & operating fund	
Grand Forks Mission	\$50,000
Housing for 80 people, repairs & operating fi	
Grand Forks Public School District No. 1	¢10 000
Artist in Residence program funding	\$10,000
Grand Forks Schools Summer Performing Art	s \$2,000
Materials for Keep the Faith II flood program	
Grand Forks Youth Committee	\$10,000
Operating expenses	
Greater Grand Forks Community Theatre	\$25,000

ommunity Theatre \$25,000 Repair Fire Hall Theatre



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Greater Grand Forks Immediate Aid	\$10,000
Provide immediate aid to people impacted by	I flood
Greater Grand Forks Senior Citizens	\$12,000
Replace kitchen, office & information system	
Greater Grand Forks Symphony	\$10,000
Continuation of symphony & youth sympho	
L.I.S.T.E.N., Inc.	\$20,000
Program fund to replace lost funds Noah's Ark Child Care Center, Inc.	\$10,000
Purchase supplies, materials, equipment an	
furniture to serve needs of children & famil	
North Valley Arts Council	\$50,000
Repair damage to Empire Arts Center	
Northern Lights Council Boy Scouts	\$10,000
Replace troop & pack equipment & campers	hips
Pine to Prairie Girl Scout Council	\$20,755
Help ensure emotional recovery of 500 Girl	Scouts
Prairie Harvest Human Services Foundation	
Replace lost equipment, furnishings & repa	
	\$10,000
Assist low-income families in weatherization	
St. Anne's Guest Home	\$39,500
Removal of pipe insulation, sanitation & rei	nsulating
St. Mary's School/Preschool/Extended Care	
Restore cafeteria, daycare, equipment & sug	
St. Michael's Children's Center	\$15,700
Replace furnishings & supplies lost in flood	
St. Michael's Elementary School Repair school office, music room, classroom,	\$25,000
Sunflake Preschool, Inc.	\$6,800
Replace basic daycare equipment & make re	
Third Street Clinic	\$23,500
Provide health care to homeless & medically	
Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.	\$13,076
One-day conference for licensed childcare p	
UND Alumni Association & Foundation	\$25,000
Replace critical equipment for medical schoo	
UND Conflict Resolution Center	\$15,000
Provide mediation for landlord/tenant dispu	
United Day Nursery, Inc.	\$50,000
Restore nursery for 200 children	
United Way of Grand Forks	\$20,000
Fund increased activities (e.g., sanitizing he	omes)
University Children's Center	\$4,250
Equip classroom & playground	
Valley Memorial Homes	\$50,000
Replace destroyed equipment & property	
Young Men's Christian Association	\$50,000
Reconstruct & replace equipment & supplie	25
North Dakota & Minnesota	¢1 00 000
AFLAC	\$132,000
Paid insurance premiums for AFLAC policy h	olaers
Wahpeton, N.D. Red River Human Services Foundation	\$575
Remove & replace floor covering	4070
Wahpeton Park Board	\$50,000
Repair three major community parks & rebu	• •
Chahinkapa Park & Zoo	
Warren, Minn.	
Warren Servant Resource Network	\$10,000
Operating support for housing, repairs,	,,
mental health services	

TOTAL More than \$1,787,000

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Mission (cont'd)

others, he felt.

In the shelter itself, many projects have been completed: the purchase of new washers and dryers, replacement of boilers and water heaters, rebuilding of the

"People are asking themselves: "Where does my treasure lie?" "

kitchen and dining room. Other projects continue, including resheetrocking the basement to house meeting rooms and a classroom. Those rooms will be used once the mission receives funding again for programming such as in-house addiction treatment — services that have not been offered since the flood.

Meanwhile, churches and other groups are also borrowing the Grand Forks Mission's new kitchen. That, says Rose, is just fine with the mission staff and residents.

"It's really nice that we can give back to the community that's been so good to the mission," she says. "There's been so much devastation, and now we are having more people come to us for help."

It's a part of the growing sense of community that has arisen in Grand Forks since the flood.

"I've never experienced it anywhere else," says Rose, who has been commuting, in her position as interim director, from her home in the Minneapolis area — about a five-hour drive. "There's truly an amazing sense of people helping each other.

"People are looking ahead and they're asking themselves, 'Where does my treasure lie?' "



"Just tell those who gave: they have been such a blessing."

Front & back cover, page 2 photos: Colburn Hvidston III, courtesy of The Forum









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