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EDMONTON, ALBERTA
T6B 2X3

CCAI/I

Attn: Mike Newark

PHOTOS TAKEN BY R. DENHARTIGH, Canadian Wildlife Service, Edmonton, Alta.

ABT SEP 25 P 11:05 173586















Near Beaumont

Tom Taylor



Near Beaumont

Tom Taylor



Rob den Hartogh

M. Ilwoods

ATMOSPHERIC HAZARDS IN CANADA
Presented at 6th Canadian Construction Congress
LIST OF SLIDES

SLIDE

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Rob Hartzig

Industrial Area

TOPIC

The earth as seen from Apollo 17
Cyclone in the occlusion stage
Hurricane Diane
Tornado near Winnipeg Airport, Aug 3, 1969
Map of tornado incidence in North America
Most disasters are weather related
London Free Press. Tornado in Windsor headline (9 actual deaths)
Curling ring deaths, Windsor, Ont. April 3, 1974 (9 in total)
School demolished. Woodstock, Ontario, tornado August 7, 1979. 3 deaths
Woodstock tornado (Aug 7, 1979). Building damage.
Edmonton, Alta, tornado damage (July 31, 1987). 27 deaths. $250M damage.
Cambridge, Ont, flood. May 17, 1974. 100 mm of rain. $7M damage
Pedestrians in the wind
Icestorm damage to power lines
Soil erosion in Alberta
Avalanche
Ice buildup on the Thomas V. Hollet, Halizax, NS, Feb 9, 1959
Forest fires near Lake Athabaska, August 27, 1981
Alberta duststorm
Drifting soil, 1930's drought, Alberta.

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BLACK FRIDAY



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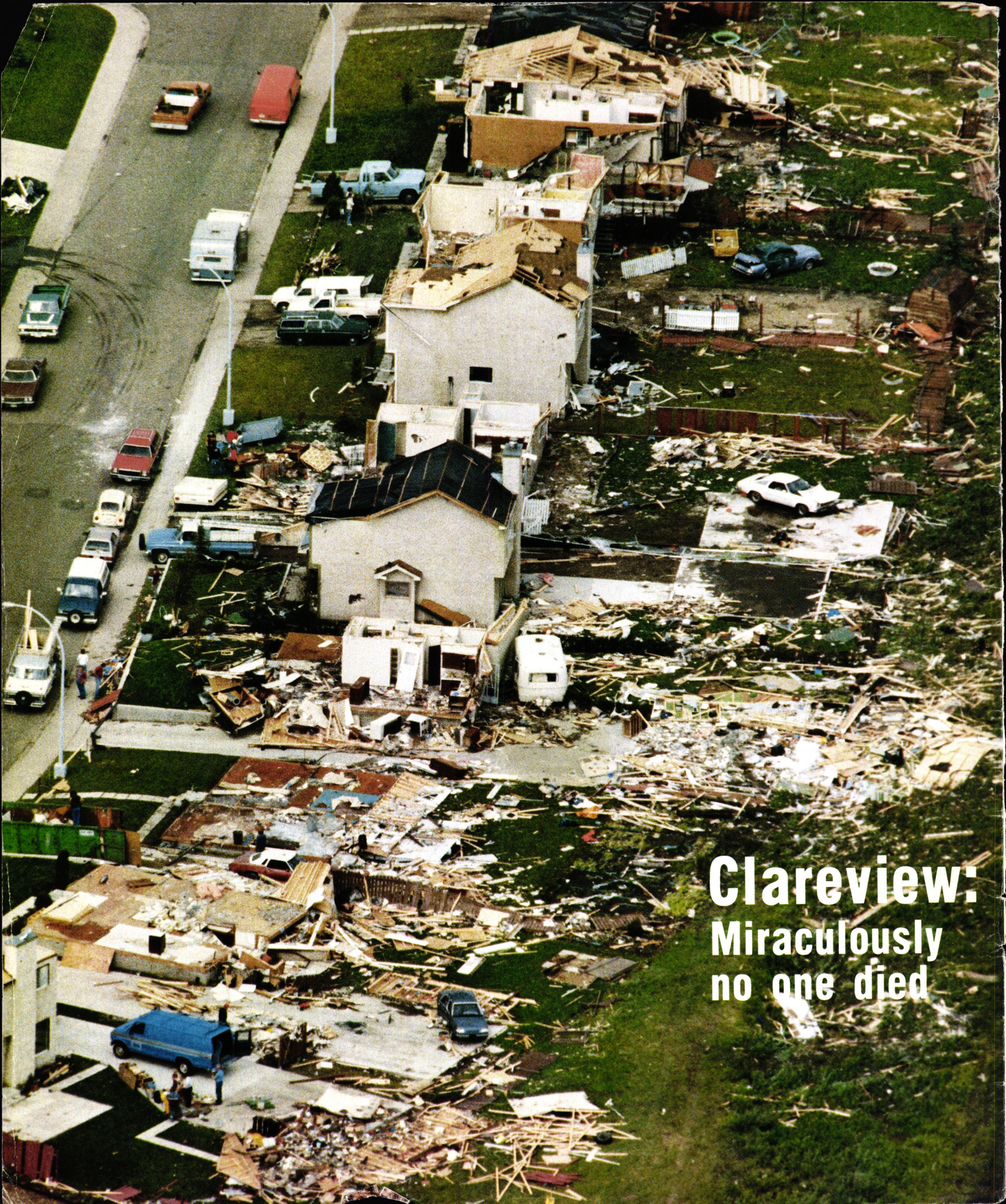

Clareview: Miraculously no one died

A DAY WE WON'T FORGET

The events of the afternoon of Friday, July 31, 1987, will live for a long, long time in the memories of Edmontonians.

After a week of sweltering heat, and as many people prepared for the long-weekend holiday, we faced a terrible natural phenomenon many of us assumed belonged exclusively to other, far-off places.

Tornado!

The very notion that one could be ripping a destructive path through our city seemed bizarre, unreal. They just don't happen here.

Well, this one did.

And in its wake it left a city and surrounding area shattered and shocked.

There was death and injury. There was awesome physical damage: Wrecked homes, farms and businesses. Destruction on a scale we could hardly imagine in *our* community.

The terrible randomness of the tornado — one family, one home spared, while lives and dreams were obliterated just next door — was felt by everyone.

The realization was chilling: It could so easily have devastated any one of us, or those we love.

In the confusion and disrupted communications following the storm, friends and relatives attempted to make sure of each other's safety. There was relief and joy — it could have been so much worse — and there was terrible sadness.

Twenty-five dead (and two more victims to die later, in hospital). Hundreds injured. Thousands homeless.

But this is not a city to stay on its knees for long. This is a city with heart.

The storm had hardly passed before hundreds of people — professionals and volunteers — were out on the streets comforting and caring for those in need.

In many ways, the response from the community (and from elsewhere in Alberta, Canada and around the world) was as awesome as the tornado itself. Courage, endurance and compassion were everywhere.

If it's true that adversity brings out the best in the human spirit, it surely brought out the best in our community and in ourselves. Our peace and stability may have been shattered temporarily, but not our confidence and our ability to care.

Nor, it should be said, our determination to restore things to the way they were.

As much as that is possible.

For some among us, the scars are deep and will take much time to heal. For most, an unsettling, disturbing experience quickly falls prey to the need to get on with life.

But we will remember that afternoon.

And we will remember those for whom it marked the end of life.

Much of the effort in producing this book has gladly been donated free. Production costs have been kept to an absolute minimum, and all the subsequent proceeds will be used for the tornado relief effort.

This record of the terrible events of July 31 is respectfully dedicated to the memory of the 27 people who perished, and to the courage of those who survived.

Paul Stanway
Associate Editor
The Edmonton Sun

THE EDMONTON SUN

EDITOR — BILL DAVIDSON
Sun Assistant Managing Editor

WRITER — KERRY DIOTTE
Sun Chief Reporter
Compiled from reports in The Edmonton Sun

PHOTOS: The Edmonton Sun Photo Department and Colin Chong, Tom Braid (Alberta Report), Roy Steele, Rob den Hartigh, Jack Dagley

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Tornado Artwork, Courtesy of National Geographic

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A Non-Profit publication in support of the Edmonton Sun Tornado Relief Fund

◄– Photo by Paul Wodehouse



Residents of the Evergreen Mobile Home Park search for their belongings amid the rubble caused by tornado.

—Photo by Doug Shanks

'I saw a narrow funnel'

Forty-four-year-old pharmacist Tom Taylor was preparing to go into work at the Nu-Way Drug Mart when he spotted the strange cloud formation hovering about five kilometres southwest of his Leduc-area farm.

"It was unusual because it was hanging lower than the rest of the clouds," Taylor recalled. "The main cloud had wisps going around it. Suddenly I saw a narrow funnel drop right to the ground kicking up dust in all directions."

At 2:59 p.m., Friday, July 31, Taylor was on the phone to the weather office giving the first warning of what would be the worst natural disaster to hit Edmonton.

After briefing weather officials, Taylor dashed up to his loft to get a better look and watched breathlessly as the bizarre cloud passed menacingly overhead, heading toward Edmonton. Minutes later he saw the funnel touch down again, six kilometres on the other side of his farm house. It had grown 10 times in size.

"When I saw how fast that funnel had dropped, it was as if somebody had flicked on a switch and turned on the power to a giant vacuum cleaner."

An hour after his warning, the tornado had steam-rolled an unbelievable path of destruction in Beaumont and southeast and northeast Edmonton leaving 27 people dead, nearly 300 injured and at least 750 families homeless. It was the costliest disaster in Canadian history. The estimated pricetag: $150 million and climbing.

The terrible twister battered farms just east of Mill Woods, then moved with savage power into that Edmonton neighborhood flattening homes and damaging others.

It spun north to the southeast industrial area, crossed the Sherwood Park Freeway, then unleashed its destructive force on Refinery Row, wiping out an estimated 50 to 60 businesses and leaving behind a twisted mass of metal and a deadly soup of spilled chemicals.

The neighborhood of Clareview was next to feel the fury after the twister crossed the North Saskatchewan. Three homes valued between $80,000 and $100,000 were flattened and 12 others suffered heavy damage.

But the most vicious battering was reserved for the 1,700 people of the Evergreen Mobile Home Park in the city's northeast. Fifteen of the residents were killed, including four members of one family. More than 200 of the 600 trailers were destroyed or damaged beyond repair, including 91 which were flattened outright by the twister.

One Evergreen victim, 18-year-old Kelly Pancel, was killed protecting her four-week-old daughter Meagan. Pancel and two other adults put the baby between them when the storm struck.

Said Louis Pancel, 22: "My daughter is alive today because of the unselfishness of my wife. She gave her life for our child."

Pat Robinson, 31, was killed as she and her husband Jim, 29, visited friends at the trailer park. The trailer they were in rolled over four times. Jim crawled from the rubble despite being hit by a washing machine. Pat was found dead in the wreckage. But besides the tales of human carnage there were stories of miraculous escapes.

As the sky blackened and the winds began roaring, panic-stricken Evergreen resident Nancy Desjarlais wrapped her two-year-old son in a

blanket, then huddled with him on a bed. Seconds later, the twister picked up the trailer and tossed it 30 metres through the air. The impact tore Aaron from her arms and sent the pair sprawling to the floor before the walls collapsed around them pinning the two beneath the rubble.

Recalled Desjarlais: "I knew I wasn't going to die. I just kept praying, 'If there is a God, please help me.' " A rescuer pulled the two free of the wreckage. Aaron escaped injury, but his 22-year-old mother suffered a broken pelvis and hip.

Resident Dix Duncan suffered a fractured skull and separated shoulder when his trailer began somersaulting in the storm. The 22-year-old gymnastics teacher lost consciousness as the trailer began flipping as he lay on his bed. While he doesn't remember the immediate aftermath, friends told him he crawled free from the rubble on his own.

Said Duncan: "I lost everything except my life. It was terrifying. I thought I was dead for sure."

Mark Ernewein, 23, said he owes his life to the fact that both he and his pregnant wife had left the park to go shopping one hour prior to the storm.

Ernewein returned to the park to find an empty lot where his trailer once stood. He managed to salvage a small portable stereo and, ironically, an 'I Love Edmonton' sticker from the small pile of rubble he found later.

Said Ernewein: "It's lucky we weren't home, it would have been impossible to survive."

Many of the residents remain so haunted by the disaster, they vow they will never return to the park, regardless of the fact insurance officials and government spokesmen have promised to pay for total reconstruction.

Said resident Tony Freeman: "My wife says she's just not going back. We were luckier than some because the tornado just ripped the skirting off the trailer's bottom. But we've already talked to a real estate agent about buying a house. A lot of people I talked to feel the same way. They just don't think they can live there anymore. It'd be like living on top of a graveyard."

Residents Cathy and Lionel Wilson said they won't return either. A still-shaken Cathy said quietly: "I don't want to bring my kids up in there."

The couple was out of town with their 12-year-old daughter and eight-month-old baby when the twister hit. They are hoping the provincial or federal government will pick up the tab for the damage. They were waiting for an unemployment insurance cheque to come in so they could insure their home.

Said Lionel Wilson: "I told my wife that I knew something would happen if we went away without insurance."

Connie Golling said she and her husband Joe are alive because they were at a St. John Bosco church bingo when the tornado hit, flipping a neighbor's trailer directly atop their unit, crushing it. The feisty grandmother remained confused days after the storm and still wasn't sure she wanted to re-settle in the park.

"I just don't know right now. I don't like the sight of rain. I don't like wind. I don't like black clouds. I'd like to move close to the church. My faith is the only thing I've got right now."

But amid the death and destruction, there were immediate signs of encouragement.

Insurance officials took out full-page newspaper advertisements proclaiming that most tornado damage would be covered.

Governments promised to cover the costs for any who weren't insured and the general public donated tons of food, clothing and furniture.

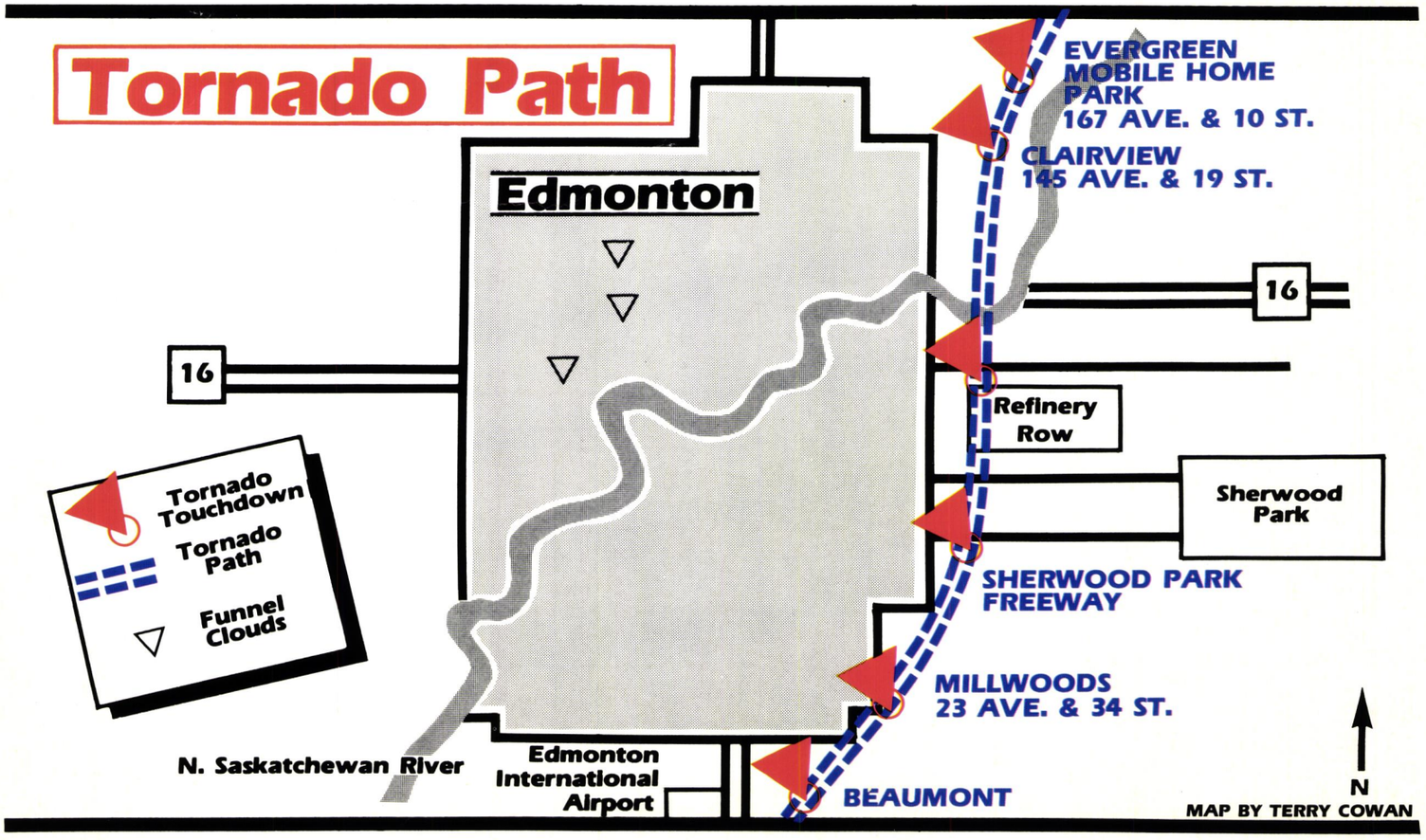
Just days after the storm, Edmonton's Emergency Relief Services had 100,000 square feet of its warehouse space filled to capacity with donated goods.

Said agency president Heather Airth: "We had so much food donated, we just sent the city food bank a semi-trailer filled with the surplus. It is just an overwhelming response."

Yet, even as crews cleared up the rubble and the victims filled out forms for donated food, new housing and unemployment insurance, psychologists predicted it could be years before the deep emotional scars heal. University of Alberta psychologist Dr. Bruce Monkhouse predicted scores of people will suffer post-traumatic stress syndrome. The illness — also called Vietnam Syndrome because it was noticed in war victims — may crop up months or even years after the disaster, plunging some into deep depression.

Said Monkhouse: "People could be coping adequately now but that could change radically in the future."

At a funeral service for the four dead members of the Reimer family, Rev. Herman Bickel verbalized what many tornado victims felt: "The circumstances seem so overwhelming to us that we don't know what to do. It seems that the Holy Spirit has forsaken us. But in spite of our paralysis and our feelings of helplessness we must carry on and continue with our lives."





Rescuers free worker trapped inside Lee Mason Tools Ltd., 6450 27 St.

Photo by Larry Wong



Survivor watches over his injured friend at 66 Ave. and 27 St.

Photo by Larry Wong



One of the survivors is removed from the rubble near 64 Ave. and 27 St. and rushed by ambulance to hospital. ▲—Photo by Larry Wong

Musician Jim Morrison (right) of Red Deer lost his van and two guitars near the Sherwood Park Freeway. —Photo by Peter Martin ▶





Mary Grandish embraces her 'miracle baby,' 3½-month-old Cody, at the Royal Alexandra.

Photo by Robert Taylor

'My little miracle baby'

The $120,000 home of Rod and Mary Grandish was among Clareview's hardest hit when the Friday twister touched down in the middle-class neighborhood. The savage tornado ripped off the roof, collapsed the walls and carried away much of the furniture. Yet they were counting their blessings. Their 3½-month-old son Cody survived.

Said the relieved 27-year-old mother: "He's my little miracle baby, I can't believe he lived through this."

Mary was busy packing for a weekend camping trip and family friend Ron Madarash was helping just before the terrible twister ravaged the home at 14527 19 St. Cody was in his crib. Then the unthinkable happened. Mary looked outside in time to see a neighbor's tool shed fly by. A holiday trailer flew through the air and crash-landed on the front lawn.

Recalled Mary: "The roof caved in and I thought we were going to die. It was like your worst nightmare. Finally we realized it had passed and I had to go find my son. I got to where Cody's room was but it was gone. So was his crib. There was nothing left. I thought, 'My God. The tornado has taken my son.' "

Mary and Madarash braved strong winds and torrential rain to search the battered home. She came to what was left of the master bedroom and her heart leapt. "I finally saw his little feet sticking out. He was flat on his back, still wearing his little sleeper. I was so worried at first because he was so quiet and he was bleeding. I could tell he was still alive but I didn't know how badly hurt he was. I kissed him and prayed he'd be OK."

Mary's prayers were answered. Doctors at the Royal Alexandra Hospital pronounced the boy healthy except for cuts and a slightly fractured skull.

Photo by Tom Braid



Little is left of the home belonging to Rod and Mary Grandish.

Great escapes

As Edmontonians grimly cleared away the rubble from the city's worst natural disaster, the tales of miraculous escapes helped to buoy spirits.

One of the most amazing stories involved the survival of six people in Evergreen Mobile Home Park Trailer No. 70, a unit which was levelled by the killer tornado. The survivors included five children and Wendy Chrisp, 23, the mother of the youngest. Wendy Chrisp suffered a broken leg, broken back and several cracked ribs. Ten-week-old Tyler Chrisp suffered a fractured skull after he was ripped out of his mother's arms and hurled more than 100 metres to a nearby road. He has had two operations to reduce swelling on his head and was in critical condition in hospital last week.

Three-year-old Troy Murdock was ripped out of a window and slammed against the wall of a nearby trailer. The boy's right arm was left hanging by two nerves and an artery. Troy was rushed to hospital where doctors worked for about six hours to re-attach the limb. Doctors are optimistic that Troy will eventually have full use of the arm.

Brandy Bond, 8, and her younger brother Clayton, 6, each received about a dozen stitches on their legs while Troy's brother David, 6, received more than two dozen stitches to his legs, arms and face.

Brandy later recalled that she felt like "a spider" as the twister picked up the trailer and hurled it though the air.

Said Brandy: "I was standing on the ceiling upside down. When I woke up, I thought I was in the garbage dump."

Troy's uncle, Mark Bourdage, said he and other relatives are astounded everyone survived the living nightmare.

Said Bourdage: "It's just unreal when you think about it. We've got to really count our blessings after this one." He said the experience was so haunting no one wants to return to the park to live. "Everyone's said they don't plan on moving back there."



Brandy Bond, 8, and her young brother Clayton, 6, escaped with cuts, bruises and stitches.

▶—Photo by Robert Taylor

▼—Photo by Paul Wodehouse



Pets affected, too



▲ —Photo by Robert Taylor

Karen Kolk (above) found toy poodle Chico, owned by hospitalized Evergreen resident Nancy Desjarlais. Ken Bond (below) cuddles a cat in the Evergreen wreckage. And Clareview resident Ken Taylor (right) stands in his former bedroom holding his dog Brutus.

Scores of household pets — many from the Evergreen Mobile Home Park — fell victim to the killer tornado which struck Edmonton. After the Friday storm the SPCA had a half dozen workers at the Evergreen site, foraging for confused or injured animals.

Surprisingly, only two adult dogs were found dead among the rubble. Of six injured cats taken to the shelter, just two were hurt badly enough to warrant being destroyed.

In all, about 150 pets of tornado victims — including geese, doves and one ferret — were taken to the SPCA shelter. Most of those were from the Evergreen park.

But five full days after the disaster, many of those terrified pets still hadn't been claimed by their now-homeless owners.

Said Cathy Wakeford: "Cats are just not being claimed and we have some beautiful ones, including a black Manx, some nice orange tabbies and a mother cat with five Siamese-type kittens. The problem is that many were brought in by people who were very shaken up themselves and many just left a first name and no phone number."

The SPCA spokesman said that despite the overcrowded conditions at the shelter, officials would make every effort to bend the rules so pets could be kept long enough to be reunited with owners.

Wakeford said she was overwhelmed with the response from area residents who donated food for the displaced animals. "An officer was quoted as saying we were short of food because our basement was flooded. After that, the food poured in and we now have a six-month supply. We've got 1,000 bags of dry dog food alone."

Officials are also convinced they have yet to round up all the cats from the mobile home park, so a special constable continued the hunt. Her tools? A large cat trap and lots of food to entice the skittish felines.

▼ —Photo by Tom Braid



▶ —Photo by Peter Cutler





Costs continue to climb

The only certainty about the damage costs of the Edmonton tornado are that they will continue to mount. Authorities first worried about saving the lives of those seriously injured in the twister. The next concern was caring for those who had escaped relatively unscathed from the cruel winds. Now the monetary costs are slowly rolling in.

Insurance officials were predicting a minimum of $150-million damage, and they admit it could climb as high as $300 million.

"I'm pretty certain it's going to go over $150 million, but I don't think it'll go over $300 million," said Alan Wood, regional vice-president of the Insurance Bureau of Canada. "The major loss is going to be in the industrial area and we've just begun to add that up."

However, costs in certain areas have been nailed down to some extent. These include:

- $20 million for losses in the Evergreen Mobile Home Park. Wood estimated the claims for homes and contents will average $50,000 for the 200 trailers which will likely be write-offs. The 200 wrecked vehicles there could pad the bill by another $2 million. Assorted costs for damaged recreational vehicles and assorted other claims will likely add millions more.

- An estimated $50- to $70-million damage to residential properties in the Mill Woods and Clareview areas.

- Between $6- and $8-million damage to TransAlta power equipment. The storm destroyed the company's Stelco sub-station, as well as 49 240,000-volt double circuit steel towers, 17 138,000-volt double circuit steel towers and 134 138,000-volt single circuit wooden structures.

- The City of Edmonton's costs will up the tab by millions more. Major damage occurred when an overloaded Kennedale storm sewer outfall collapsed. The city received hundreds of calls because of flooded basements, meaning 20 three-man crews worked around the clock racking up costly overtime.

- Vehicles throughout the Edmonton area were damaged either directly by the twister or by hail, some of which measured 10 inches across. One insurance adjuster estimated 25 auto dealers located in the worst hit areas had suffered extensive damage, many of them more than $100,000.

Arlene Reimer (in red), is comforted by relatives at the funeral of her husband and three children.

◀ – Photo by Peter Cutler

An aerial view of the northeast Edmonton suburb of Clareview shows some of the devastation.

▼ – Photo by Paul Wodehouse



How our twister formed

Edmonton and area residents had sweated for days through record high temperatures and extremely rare humidity. Those weather conditions proved a perfect breeding ground for the formation of a powerful tornado, a phenomenon many residents had previously not been able to fathom.

Said Environment Canada spokesman Neil Meadows: "The humidity had been very high. The wind or windshear was very strong that day, coming from the south. When that warm, moist air hit cooler air coming in from the west, the funnel cloud or clouds began to form."

Weather officials said those funnel clouds are fed by the warm, rising air and the vortex in turn is bolstered by the winds blowing at varying speeds and directions. The created jet stream continues to carry the air even as it cools and that updraft sucks even more air into the funnel cloud's column.

Meadows said the notion that tornadoes rarely form in Alberta is a widespread misconception.

"In actual fact we get an average of eight per year in the province which are of varying strengths. We get about one per year of the strength of the one which hit that Friday. In the past we've simply been fortunate that they haven't hit built-up areas."

He said early estimates rate the latest twister a three on a scale of five, meaning the tornado could have been swirling at up to 330 kilometres per hour. And Environment Canada offi-

Inside a violent storm

Strong winds flowing over weaker winds can cause the air in between to spin on a horizontal axis, like a pencil rolling along a table (small diagram, below). When a vigorous updraft ingests this spinning air, its rotation tilts toward the vertical and causes the updraft to rotate. Without such rotation no thunderstorm can produce a tornado.



WHY DOES ONE THUNDERSTORM and not another produce a tornado? It depends on how surrounding winds interact with the storm's updraft, the flow of warm, moist air that rises up its core. When the updraft is strong, air being drawn into the storm may surge upward as fast as 100 miles an hour to heights of ten miles or more. This rising column of air will rotate if surrounding winds vary sharply in speed or direction from lower to higher levels. Such a rotating updraft, called a mesocyclone, is the parent circulation of large tornadoes.

Only about half of all mesocyclones, however, produce tornadoes. When they do, the twister usually appears on the storm's rear side, near where a stream of cool air from the rear-flank downdraft spins into the warm, main inflow. Drawing upon the strength of the mesocyclone, the tornado may extend upward through the storm for several miles. Only the most violent last for more than a few tens of minutes.

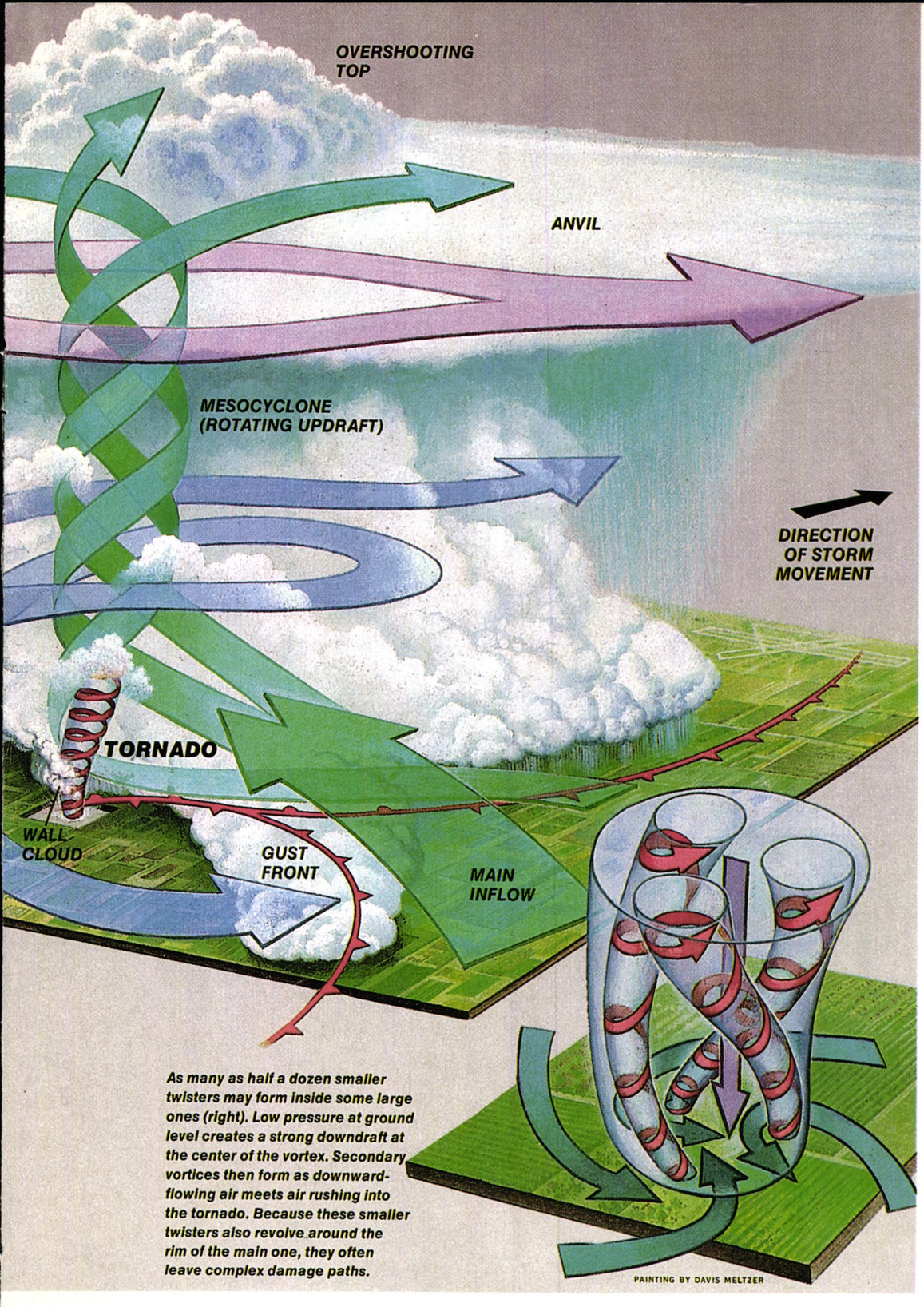
Scientists who scan thunderstorms with Doppler radar report that mesocyclones may appear as much as 20 minutes before tornadoes, offering hope for more accurate, timely warnings.







Reprinted with permission — National Geographic June, 1987



As many as half a dozen smaller twisters may form inside some large ones (right). Low pressure at ground level creates a strong downdraft at the center of the vortex. Secondary vortices then form as downward-flowing air meets air rushing into the tornado. Because these smaller twisters also revolve around the rim of the main one, they often leave complex damage paths.

PAINTING BY DAVIS MELTZER

cials still aren't sure whether there was one tornado or several, he said.

Meadows noted that the worst death toll by tornado in Western Canada came when 28 people were killed by a 1912 Regina, Sask. twister.

"Seven tornadoes have hit Edmonton and area since 1879, killing 22," he said. "With the latest one we've more than doubled that (death toll) in one fell swoop."

A great gesture

Provincial employee Rob den Hartigh kept snapping pictures even as the killer tornado advanced towards his office.

And den Hartigh has parlayed those pictures into a unique way of helping the victims. He started selling the series of shots to co-workers and in the first two days raised almost $1,500 for the tornado relief fund.

He said most people were buying pictures because they took shelter and never saw the full-formed twister.

Said the mechanical engineering technologist for Alberta Transportation: "By the time the funnel formed, you knew which way it was going so we felt sure we were safe. What you're seeing in the pictures is the tornado from the time it passes the Whitemud Freeway. You can actually see the funnel starting to form."

Den Hartigh shot the pictures from his third-floor office window at the Twin Atria, 4999 98 Ave.

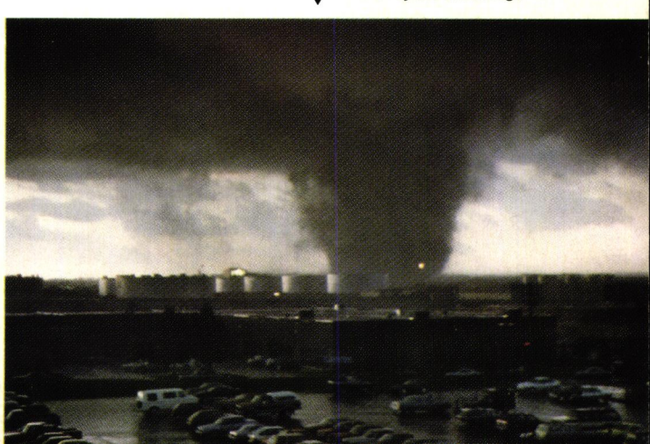
With a reduced copying rate from ColorFast, $1.70 from each five-by-seven inch print sold goes to the fund.

Den Hartigh was displaying the photos, with order forms, in the lobby of the Twin Atria building, weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Below are five of the 12-shot series.

▼—Photos by Rob den Hartigh







NIGHTMARE

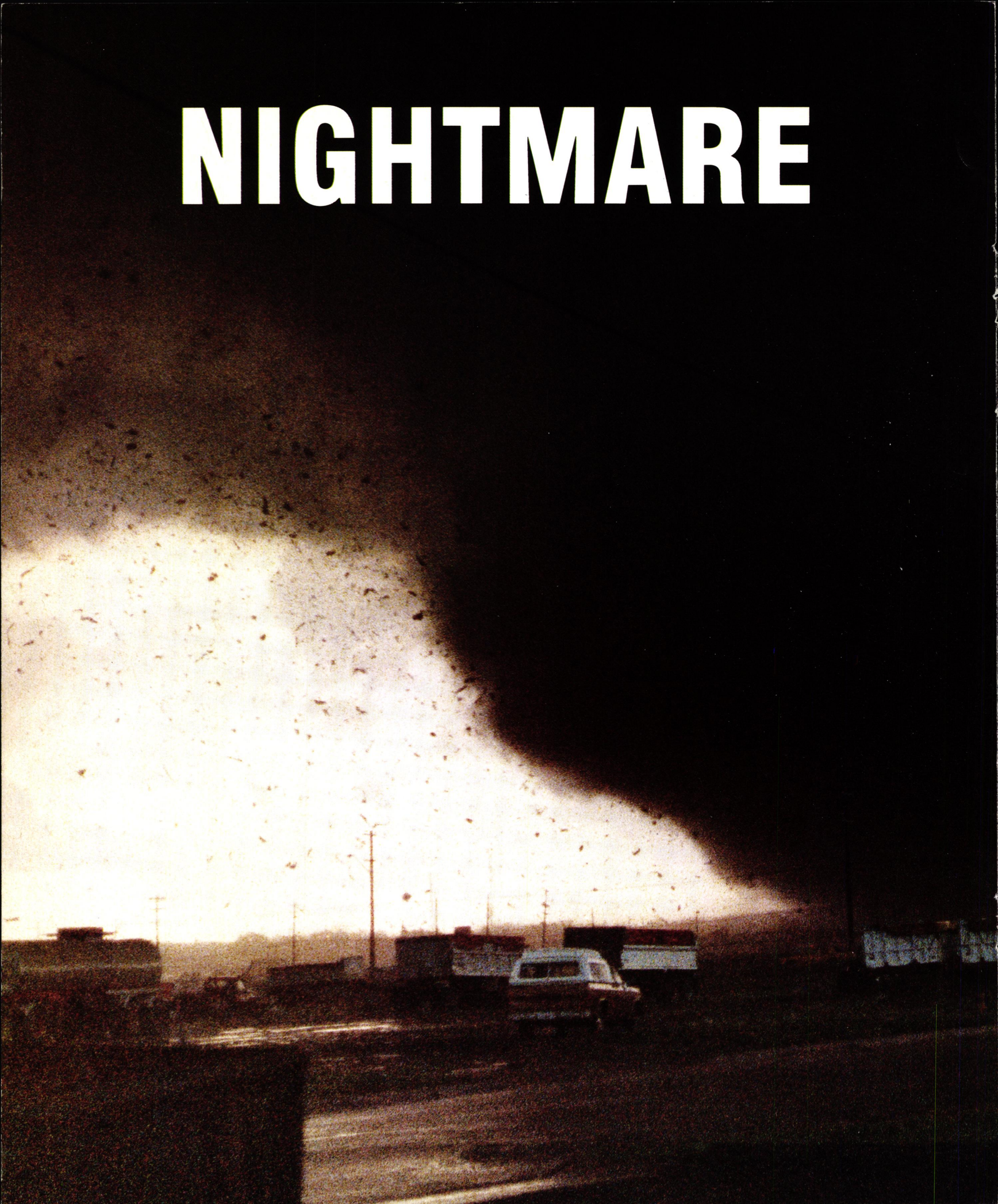
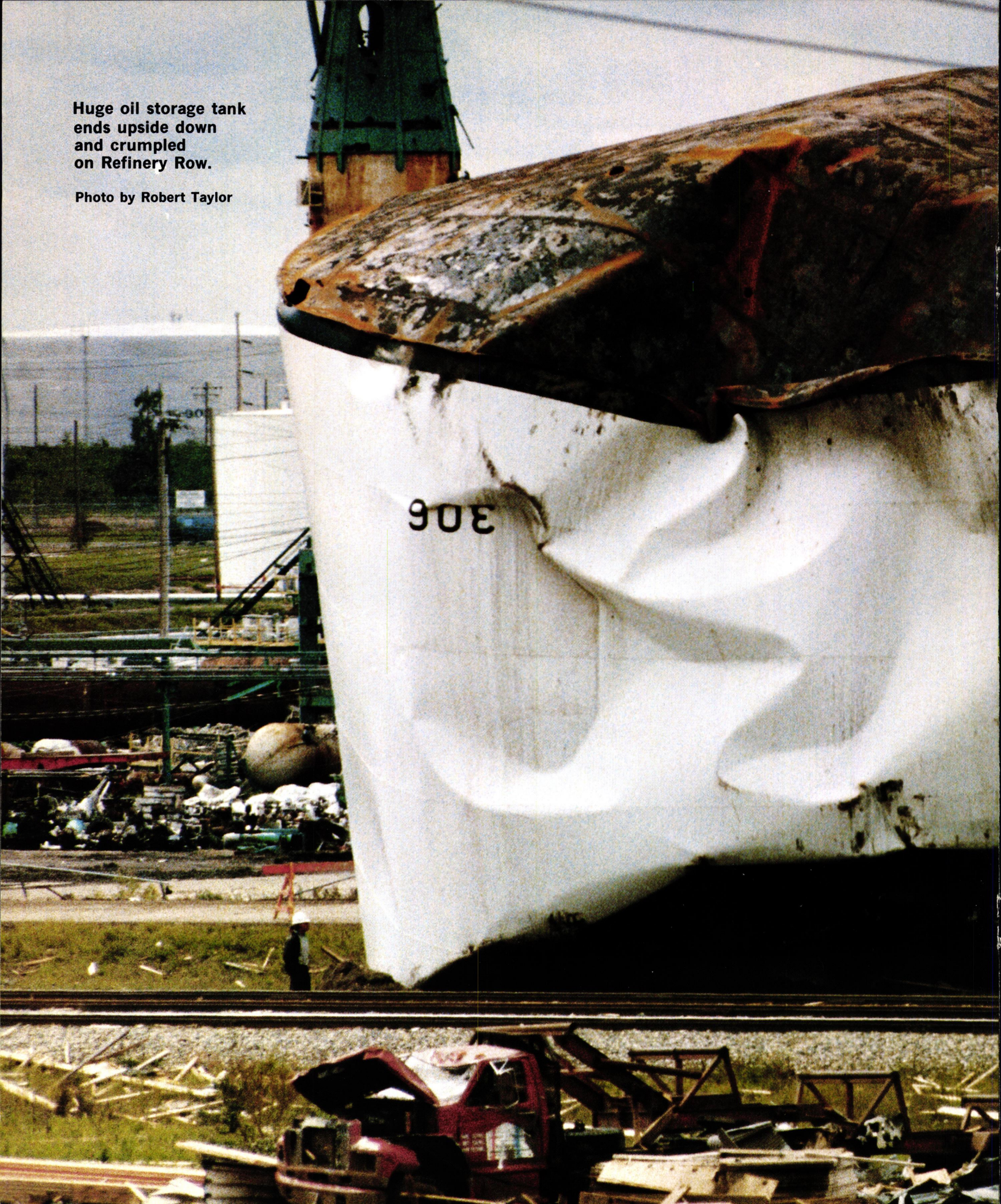




Photo by Roy Steele



Huge oil storage tank ends upside down and crumpled on Refinery Row.

Photo by Robert Taylor

306



Stelco, employing 650, was among those businesses in the industrial park to suffer the most damage.

—Photo by Paul Wodehouse

Industrial park crushed

It was days before officials could loosen restrictions on access to the devastated Strathcona industrial area where fears of deadly chemical spills led police to severely restrict traffic. RCMP estimated that between 50 to 60 businesses were damaged or destroyed by the twister in a three-block-wide and 20-block-long section.

The industrial park resembled a bombed out war zone following the tornado. Twisted metal lay everywhere. About a dozen cars from a CN Rail freight train were blown off the tracks near the Yellowhead Hwy. and 17 St. The storm flipped over a giant oil storage tank on 101 Ave. east of 34 St. Among the companies hit were Laidlaw Waste Disposal, Byers Transportation, Nault Lumber and Stelco, which employed 650 people. It was estimated it could be six to nine months before that steel mill would be fully operational.

While estimates are still not complete, insurance officials were predicting tens of millions or even hundreds of millions in total damage for the area. The cost in human terms was more tangible — 12 died beneath the twisted rubble.

Dean Mason was only three metres away when he watched in horror as his machinist chum Ed Mendoza, 40, was killed by a collapsing wall at Lee Mason Tools at 6450 27 St. Workmate Rick Gillespie, 29, was killed when he was pinned under a heavy piece of machinery. His wife Sharon said her husband was an avid carpenter who had a special knack for creating furniture. "I'll keep everything he ever made," she said.

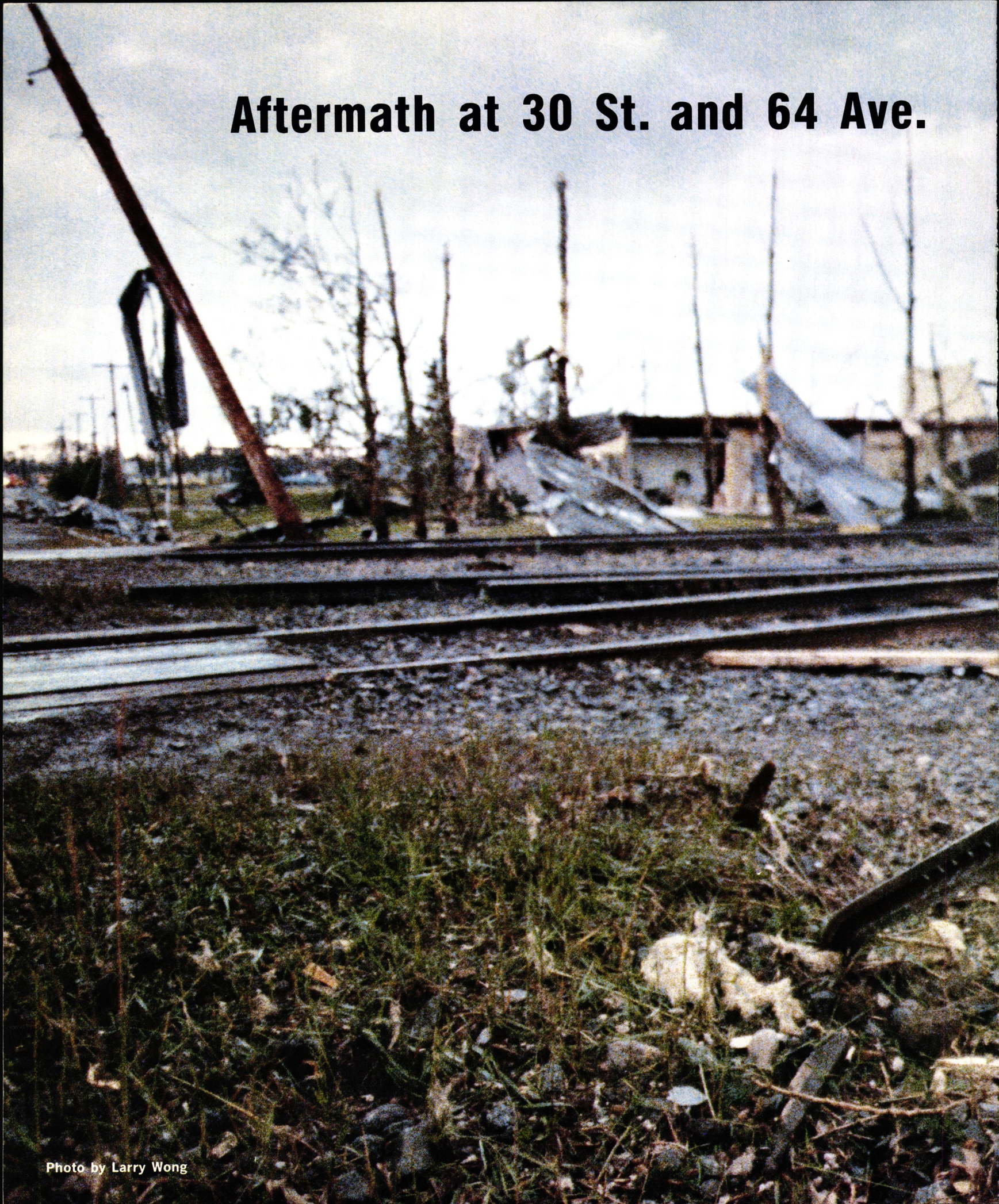
Grant Hartfeil, 34, a warehouse manager for Snap-On Tools in the park, died while making a business call in a truck. Ironically, his place of business was one of the few that escaped unscathed from the storm. Said Hartfeil's brother Rod: "He was out with one of the dealers in the dealer's truck. From what we can tell, he was only out of his office for about 10 minutes." The Hartfeil family went through agony waiting for word on his fate. They found out a day after the storm that he was dead. Hartfeil left behind a wife and three children, aged two to six years old. Said brother Rod: "He didn't have his wallet on him, so they couldn't identify him right away."



Words can't adequately describe the awesome devastation and destruction along Refinery Row.

▲▼—Photos by Robert Taylor





Aftermath at 30 St. and 64 Ave.

Photo by Larry Wong


STOP



Firemen remove body of a victim killed when the walls collapsed on this building north of the Sherwood Park Freeway.

—Photo by Peter Martin



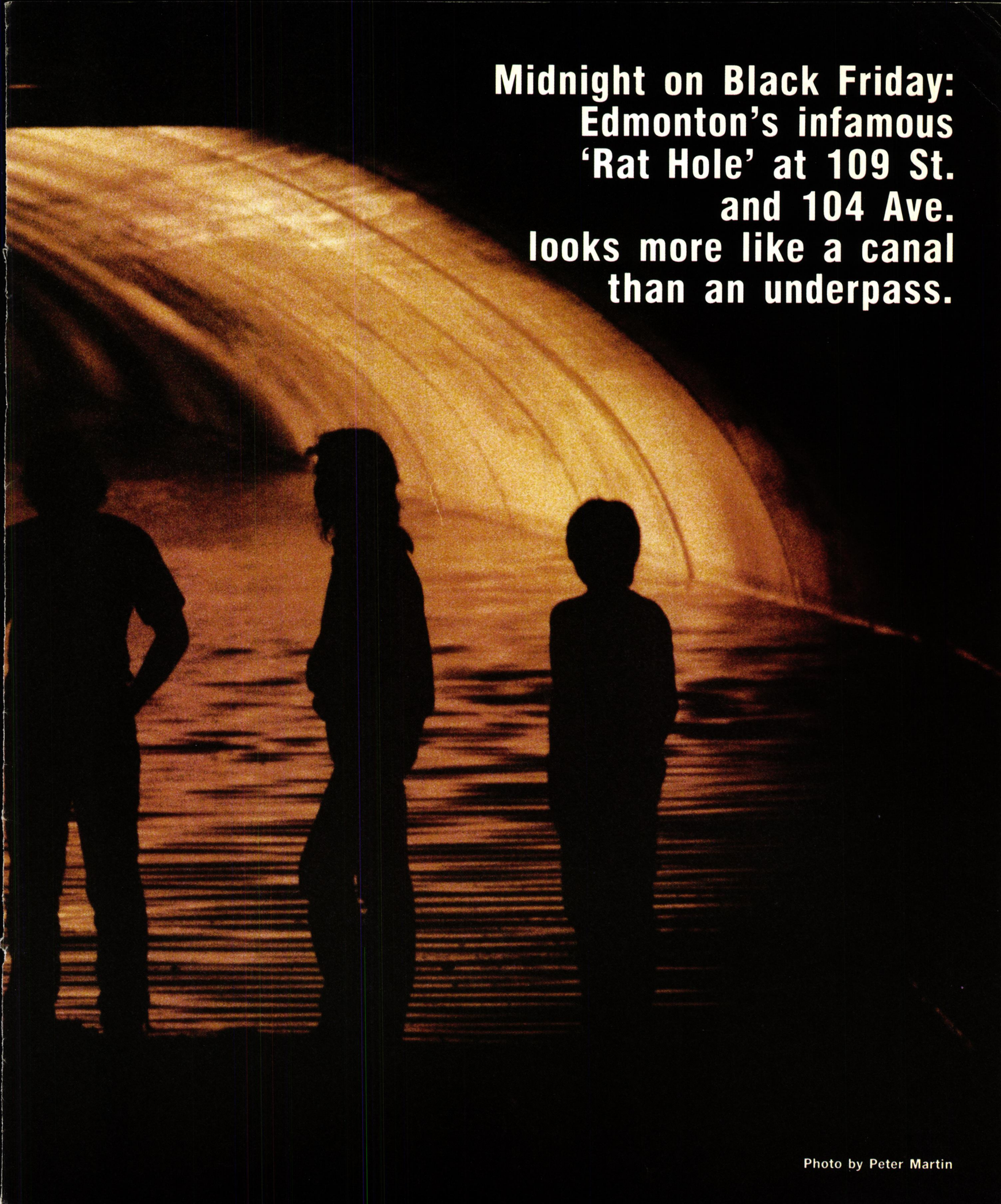
▲—Photo by Tom Braid

Cars, reacting more like children's toys, end up in twisted wreckage.

▼—Photo by Larry Wong







Midnight on Black Friday: Edmonton's infamous 'Rat Hole' at 109 St. and 104 Ave. looks more like a canal than an underpass.

Photo by Peter Martin



▲—Photo by Jack Dagley

Premier Getty and wife Margaret at Evergreen Mobile Home Park.

▼—Photo by Larry Wong



Aid instantly pledged

Federal, provincial and municipal politicians descended on the hardest-hit areas of our tornado-devastated city to get a first-hand look at the damage and to pledge aid for the victims. Less than two hours after the storm, Edmonton Mayor Laurence Decore declared a state of emergency in the city of 650,000. After a Friday tour of the Evergreen Mobile Home Park, an emotional Decore broke down and cried on television for the victims. Said Decore later: "I've never seen more fatalities in my life in a makeshift morgue. I've never seen steel twisted in the way it was." He later asked for a review of the way forecasters alert the public of severe weather. "Perhaps you should err on the side of being cautious and give people warnings," he said.

Hot on Decore's heels came provincial politicians, including Premier Don Getty, who toured the most heavily-damaged areas. During a tour of the Evergreen site with cabinet ministers Les Young and Ian Reid, Getty vowed, "We're going to work to restore things for the people to the way things were before. If it means rebuilding trailers, we'll rebuild trailers. We'll worry about the costs later." The grim-looking Getty, accompanied by his wife Margaret, stopped to talk to several victims and repeated his government's pledge to give "generous" financial assistance. One tornado victim, whose house was levelled, said Getty told him, "whatever your insurance doesn't cover, the province will cover."

Less than a week after the storm, the province put up $12 million in interim relief funding and vowed that if more was needed the fund would be beefed up.

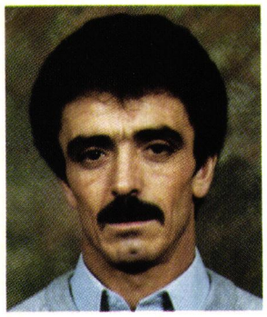
Federal cabinet ministers Joe Clark and Don Mazankowski both made on-site appearances on the bleak weekend following the killer storm. Clark also toured the city's Emergency Relief Centre to witness the donations pour in for the homeless. The ministers' visits were followed by an appearance by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney who was in the city to announce a western economic diversification program. While touring the sites, Mulroney also pledged unspecified federal financial assistance to victims. Said the PM: "It looks like almost total disaster."



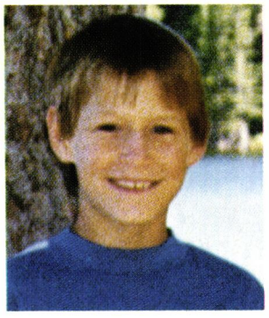
Joe Clark with Heather Airth of Emergency Relief Services.

Brian Mulroney views the wreckage at Evergreen Mobile Home Park.

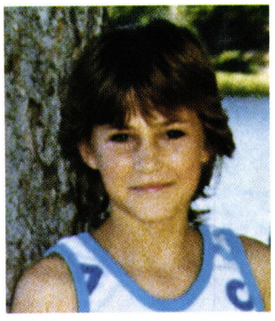
—Photos by Doug Shanks



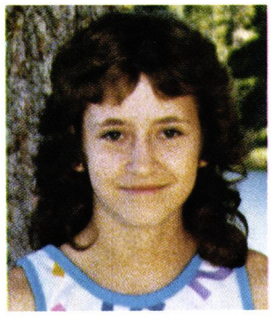
Manuel Carreiro



Darcy Reimer



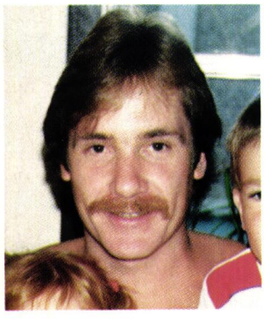
Dawn Reimer



Dianne Reimer

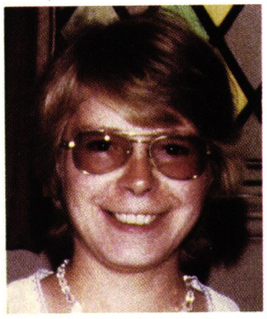


Marvin Reimer



Grant Hartfeil

VICTIMS



Pat Robinson



Merle Rosychuk



Ajmer Dhaliwal

JIM ALLAN

Jim Allan, 51, died in the Evergreen Mobile Home Park.

He had one son, Jim Jr. and two daughters, Lee and Lisa, all of Edmonton.

Allan's family asked memorial donations be made to the Canadian Diabetes Association.

• • •

SHARON DENISE ANDRUCHOW

Sharon Denise Andruchow, 15, died in the Evergreen park.

She is survived by her parents and one sister.

Her family asked instead of flowers, donations be made to the Northern Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation.

• • •

MARIE JEANETTE BARKER

Evergreen resident Marie Jeanette Barker, 50, was a grandmother of nine who enjoyed life most while caring for children.

Her family asked that in lieu of flowers donations be made to the Northern Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation, because of her love for children.

"She touched a lot of lives, but kids were most important to her," said son-in-law Dan McGee. "It was always the kids that concerned her most. She was a very simple woman, she didn't want much."

• • •

MANUEL CARREIRO

Manuel Carreiro, 38, was planning to move to Brazil to join his wife and two children in the fall after working the summer with his brother's landscaping firm.

His brother, Bill Carreiro, 44, said he and Manuel were picking up materials at Nault Sawmill and Lumber, 6274 25 St.

"All of a sudden he was gone. It felt like the end of the world," said Bill.

Carreiro's wife and two children, Jason and Jessica, had moved to Brazil and were expecting Manuel to open a car repair shop there.

• • •

GEORGE DEMETRIUS

George Demetrius, 19, was found dead in the rubble of Nault Sawmill and Lumber.

His fiance, Vonda Foraie, 24, said she and relatives weren't worried when George didn't come home on time from work the day the twister came down.

"We just thought he was out helping others because he was always helping out others," she said.

• • •

ED DERY

Ed Dery, 40, might be alive if the independent trucker had stayed in his truck.

Dery's brother-in-law, Jim Butchko, said Ed's truck was found undamaged and running in the North Star Transport yard after the storm passed.

"Ed's truck was still running when it was found. It's hard to believe. If he'd stayed in his truck, he might still be alive. We sit back and wonder," said Butchko.

Dery left a wife and two children from a previous marriage.

AJMER DHALIWAL

Ajmer Dhaliwal, 30, had just returned from a trip to India to bring his wife of four years back to Canada.

His brother-in-law, Harbhajn Singh Tiwana, said Dhaliwal immigrated to Canada in 1978. He returned to India four years ago to marry, and just recently won immigration status for his wife Mandhier, 30.

He went to India in January and returned July 13 with Mandhier.

Dhaliwal and his wife left behind a son in India. They were hoping to earn enough money to bring the boy over as well, said Tiwana.

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LLOYD FANKHANEL

Lloyd Fankhanel, 55, died in the Evergreen park.

He left a wife, two sons and one daughter.

His family asked anyone inclined to make a memorial donation to the Alberta Lung Association.

• • •

RICHARD GILLESPIE

Richard Gillespie, 29, was killed at Lee Mason Tools in Edmonton's southeast.

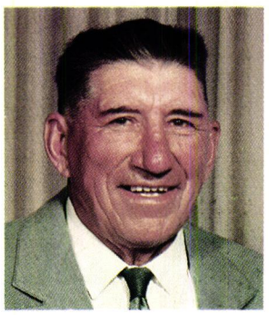
Gillespie was an oil field worker at the yard at 6450 27 St.

His widow, Sharon, 29, said Richard was taking a woodworking course at NAIT and had a knack for carpentry. She said he created many things, including a favorite desk.

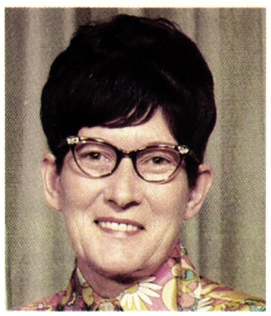
"I'll keep everything he made," she said.

The couple was married eight years.

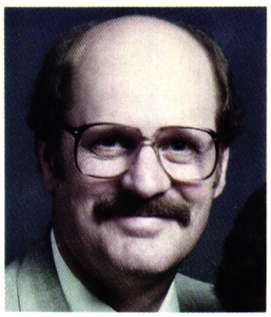
JULY 31 1987



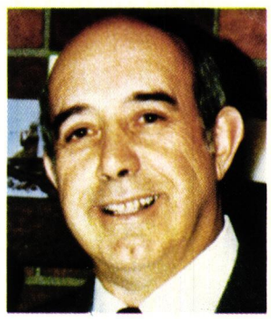
Alfred Nolin



Etta Nolin



Ed Dery



Clem Nault

GRANT HARTFEIL

Grant Hartfeil, 34, was a warehouse manager for Snap-On Tools in the Sherwood Industrial Park.

In tragic irony, the building which houses his office escaped Friday's tornado unscathed, said Hartfeil's brother Rod.

"He was out with one of the dealers in the dealer's truck. From what we can tell he was only out of his office for about 10 minutes," said Rod Hartfeil.

Grant lived in Sherwood Park with his wife and three children — two girls aged four and two, and one boy, aged six.

• • •

DANIEL LEWIS

Daniel Lewis, 18, had only started his job as a laborer at Alberta Truss one month before tragedy struck the company's yard on 101 Ave.

Lewis was found under the rubble of the shop.

The teenager had just gotten out of a car as the tornado approached and went towards the shop.

His boss, Al Pflughaupt, said the car was thrown and flipped.

• • •

TO LY

To Ly, 45, was found dead near a business at 25 St. and 84 Ave.

He is survived by his wife, Angele, two sons, Peter and William, and all the Banh family. In lieu of other tributes, the family asked that donations be made to a trust fund for the children.

• • •

EDITO MENDOSA

Ed Mendosa, 40, told a co-worker he had worked for three years without a day off to earn enough money to come to Canada.

He was originally from the Philippines, said co-worker Glen Petruk.

Mendosa worked as a machinist at Lee Mason Tools.

Mendosa left a wife, Ameurfina, two sons, Jonathan and Robert, and one daughter, Susan.

• • •

CLEM NAULT

Clem Nault, 54, spent 30 years building his lumber company in the Strathcona Industrial sector.

"The company was his life," said his grieving wife Gladys Nault.

"Words can't express my feelings."

His body was found early Saturday in the rubble of Nault Sawmill and Lumber.

Nault has one daughter named Lisa.

• • •

ALFRED and ETTA NOLIN

Fred Nolin, 82, and his wife Etta, 73, died during a visit to their daughter at Evergreen.

Their daughter was not home when the tornado struck the trailer and killed Fred, a retired yard man for a lumber company, and Etta, a cashier.

The Nolins were from Cochin, Saskatchewan, 150 km northwest of Saskatoon.

They had two children, both living in the Edmonton area, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

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GRAHAM PALMER

Graham Palmer, 43, died at the Evergreen park.

Palmer, of Sherwood Park, left his wife Lynda, a son and two daughters.

• • •

MARY PUTNAM

Mary Putnam, 59, died in the Evergreen park.

She left her husband, two sons and two grandsons.

• • •

KELLY PANCEL

Kelly Pancel, 18, died in saving her month-old daughter Meagan.

They were in a trailer in the Evergreen park.

Kelly placed the baby between her and another woman during the storm's onslaught, but Kelly was killed.

"It was a very courageous thing she did. She gave up her life for her daughter," said Kelly's mother-in-law Donna Pancel.

• • •

DARCY, DAWN, DIANNE and MARVIN REIMER

Arlene Reimer, 42, lost her 40-year-old husband Marvin and her three children — Dianne, 13, and 11-year-old twins Darcy and Dawn — in the Evergreen park.

The family had moved into the park last Christmas.

"Nothing can help us now," she said. "But I wish there was some way to save other people from this. To lose one person is terrible. But to lose four out of one family — it's just too many."

• • •

PAT ROBINSON

Pat and Jim Robinson were visiting friends at the Evergreen park, arriving when the power went out.

Pat's sister, Bev Williamson, said the trailer rolled several times killing Pat, 31, and injuring her husband Jim, 29.

"We've been with him every day," said Williamson, 33.

Pat was found dead at the scene.

"She helped lots of people in her life," said Williamson. "She was such a nice person."

• • •

MERLE SHIRLEY ROSYCHUK

Evergreen resident Merle Shirley Rosychuk had a new marriage and was looking forward to a fourth grandchild.

The 50-year-old widow was about to embark on a new life after her upcoming marriage to Stan Lukianchuk, 39, of Edmonton in the fall.

Rosychuk had three daughters, three grandchildren and a fourth on the way.

• • •

GREGORY TRABENIK

Father-of-three Gregory Trabenik, 41, died in the Sherwood Industrial Park.

He was a branch manager for Finning Allied, a construction equipment firm.

His wife Nina said Trabenik joined the local Chinese Lion's Club at the invitation of a friend two years ago.

"He loved doing it," she said.

He also loved to take his three children — Leanne, 12, Shelly, 17, and Brent, 9 — to Little League games.

• • •

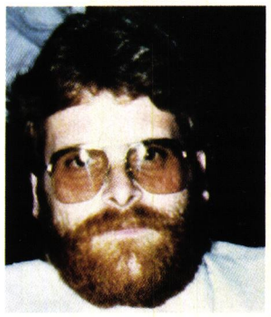
EUGENE ZAPARYNIUK

Eugene Zaparyniuk, 42, of Edmonton died in Royal Alexandra Hospital at 6:20 p.m. Aug. 6 from a blood clot resulting from internal injuries sustained during the tornado.

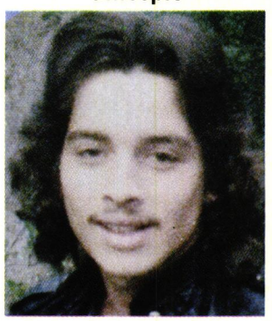
He was found with multiple injuries in his vehicle on the Strathcona Industrial Site.



Gregory Trabenik



Richard Gillespie



George Demetrius



Kelly Pancel



Pat Bugeaud fights back the tears while a backhoe digs through what was once her home at the Evergreen park.

Photo by Doug Shanks

Citizens respond

Even before the tornado had completed its path of destruction in Edmonton, volunteers were lining up to help victims. "It was unbelievable," said Emergency Relief Services' president Heather Airth. "We had people calling in to offer assistance and to donate goods literally before the tornado had finished."

It was just the beginning of a landslide of help for those in dire need. People offered their own time as well as food, clothing, furniture and cold hard cash.

By early September the Canadian Red Cross Society had collected $1,155,573 nationwide. Relief Services had received $192,500 and readers of *The Edmonton Sun* and its sister papers in Calgary and Toronto had chipped in more than $116,600. As well, the first and second printings of this magazine raised almost $200,000 for the relief fund.

In fact, money came in as fast as officials could total it, often from faraway places. Ottawa radio station CFRA staged an impromptu radiothon and raised $58,000. Individuals from tornado-prone southern U.S. states sent cheques. And banks, burger joints and corner stores set up donation boxes to accept money from customers.

Less than two weeks after the storm, the Edmonton chapter of the Red Cross had 1,300 individuals offer everything from food to accommodation, to their own spare time.

Said Red Cross volunteer services co-ordinator Dan Smith: "We've had offers from people wanting to help rebuild homes or drive folks around. We've even had someone offer their cabin at Lake Eden. It's overwhelming."

Airth was equally impressed by the show of support. Her organization had easily filled 100,000 square feet of warehouse space with donated goods and had enough surplus to give tons of food to the Edmonton Food Bank. Said Airth: "People have given everything from soup to nuts. I wish there was some way I could give them all a big collective hug."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