

The Norwood Storm Stories event, hosted at the Morrill Memorial Library on 10/26/2023, brought together Norwood residents and Norwood Staff to share stories of some real whoppers. The full event and all stories can be viewed on Norwood Community Media's website at the following link:

<http://71.174.214.34:1500/CablecastPublicSite/show/12664?channel=1>

In addition to the stories shared in person, emails were sent to all recipients of Norwood's municipally run flood assistance grant that issued over \$400,000 of assistance to homeowners after the June 28, 2020 flood, asking for their stories. The responses that were received were read by volunteers at the event, and are gathered here along with an account from the Fire Department which was not able to send a representative.

Elizabeth E

While my daughter was in Plainville enjoying a beautiful day. The weather turned bad here, hail was just the beginning. I live near the high school..... we all know how bad the rain was Then it poured into my two level basement. In the end I got 2-1/2 feet. It came in Quick, Thank God for Norwood Electric. I never lost my power so my pumps kept working. This video shows how quickly the water came in. I'm the meantime I was outside building up a blockage around the stairwell going into the basement. It was pouring down the stair like the pictures we saw of cottage street in the news.

In the end it took days to get it all out, no furnace, no hot water, showering and doing laundry at friend's houses Thank God for friends



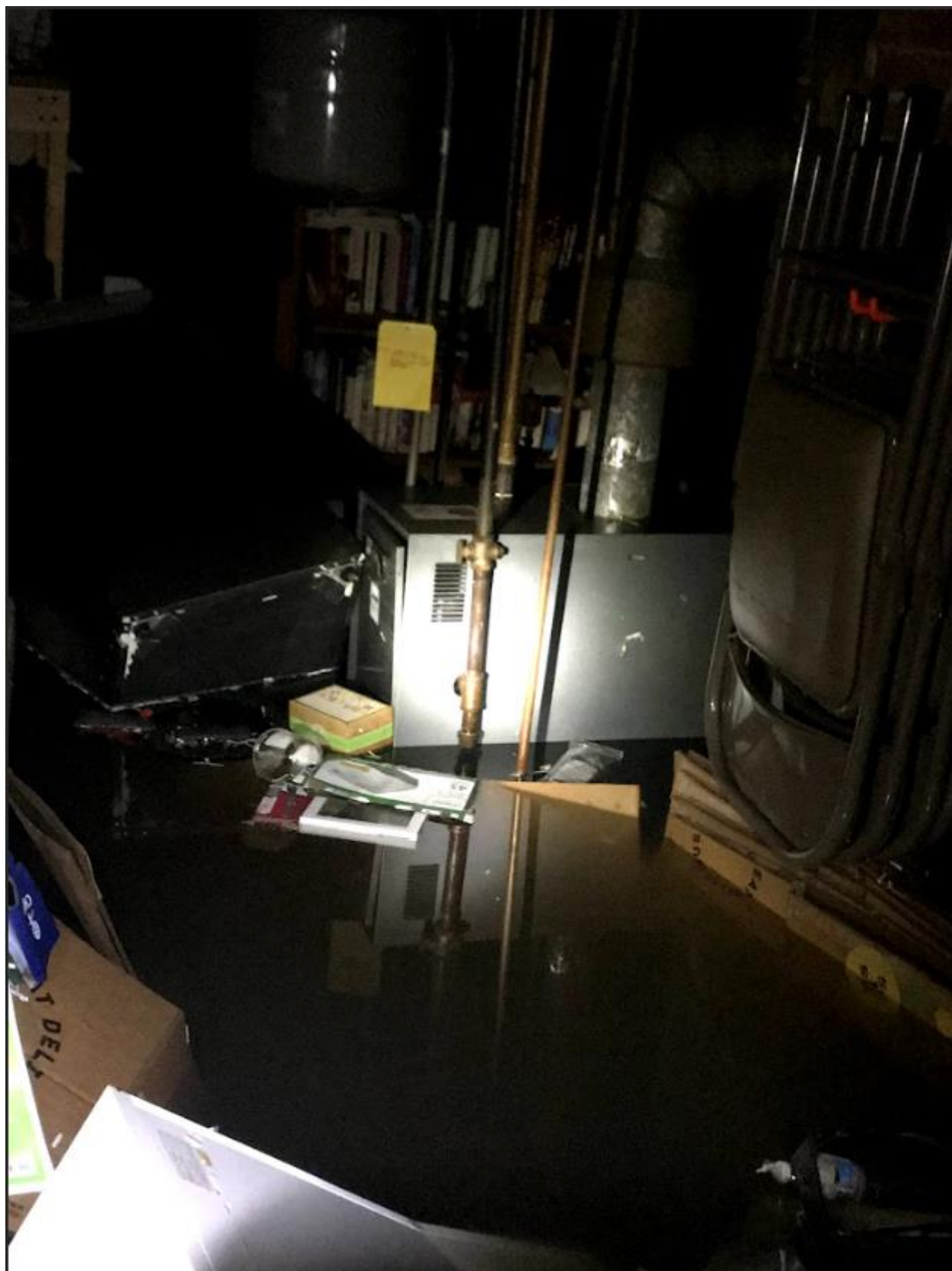


Matt Moniz

My name is Matt Moniz, my wife Ashley and I lived at 45 Rock St in Norwood. We were victims of the flood that day. June 28th will forever be etched in our memories. It still affects us today during downpours. It was traumatic and we felt alone in dealing with it. We lost everything in that basement (mechanical items included.) We have since moved to Mansfield but still have our photos from that day for insurance purposes (the state or insurance didn't help us).









Anonymous, from Andrews St.

Our flood story:

On June 28th, 2020, we were greatly affected by the flood in Norwood. We lived right behind Shaw's on Andrews St. In fact, to my understanding, we were more affected than anyone else I have talked to since then. While our neighbors suffered some loss and lots of headaches, we suffered a huge mental load and years of a rebuild. Here is our story.

My husband and I were down the Cape on an annual trip with friends. We were enjoying a little time away since COVID had kept us all cooped up inside for several months. With everyone tested and symptom-free, we were having a good time. 24 hours later, our neighbor sent us a video of our backyard completely flooded. Stunned since it wasn't even raining in Wellfleet, we called her. She said she saw our cat floating on a couch in our basement. The water was so high, it reached the basement window and she could see our cat in distress. Trying to rescue her, our neighbor and her son made their way into our house and asked us "how many stairs do you have down to your basement? Because we only see 3." We had at least 12. We immediately

started driving home, leaving all of our stuff at the Cape house. In tears and high anxiety, the whole 2-hour drive home, we finally made it and luckily our cat was still alive. In survival mode and in denial about our entire FINISHED basement being completely destroyed, we turned off the power to the house and my husband waded in the 5 feet of water to rescue our cat on the couch. He passed her through the small basement window to me. She freaked out, appropriately given the circumstance, and bit me and my neighbor pretty bad. I tried to pin her down but when she bit us we both let go and she ran up a tree in our front yard. Luckily, a very short tree. Over an hour later, in the pouring rain, she finally gave in and we rescued her on a ladder by pushing her into her crate. The whole neighborhood was watching and a little girl across the street later told us she was so scared for our cat the whole time. I was beside myself and we feel so lucky that she didn't a. drown, and b. run away. She is alive and well to this day. It sent my neighbor to the ER who was then on antibiotics via IV drip for quite a while. She ended up filing a lawsuit against us, reasonably so, and our homeowner's insurance covered the damage from the bite. I also went to the ER that night for the bite but was luckily less injured.

Anyway, after the cat was rescued, we now had to deal with the horrific scenario that half of our house was completely destroyed. All of our memories were down there. Photos, memory books, yearbooks, textbooks, work materials, all paperwork. All just gone. All our major appliances and lots of furniture was down there, too. Washing machine, dryer, hot water heater, a full bathroom with shower, fully furnished family room. Everything was ruined. I suffered a full-blown panic attack and still have PTSD from it to this day. How could this happen to us? It was just so shocking. Water must have just been pouring in. Our poor cat. Our poor first home.

The dust settled and the house got pumped out. The damage was so severe I refused to look in the basement for at least a week. Family and friends came to help us clear out the mess. We paid \$6,000 for a junk removal company to remove everything. Our stuff was unrecognizable. The basement was stripped down to the beams. Anything we could save, we did, but it wasn't much. Family wedding albums- destroyed. Photos from childhood- gone. Important documents- trashed. My Bat Mitzvah album- garbage. We spent the next year and a half completely redoing the basement. The cost was about \$60,000 when all was said and done. The town of Norwood gave us a few thousand which didn't even scratch the surface. A gofundme was set up for us by extraordinary people, and caring family and friends raised about \$10,000. My husband worked full days and came home and laid floor down, put up drywall, and painted every single night and weekend. He built a retaining wall out of our old bulkhead to try to stop any future "100 year storms".

Time passed by, the basement was refinished, and we were ready to get out of that house as soon as possible, and frankly, out of Norwood. We moved in January of 2022. We planned on raising a family in that house and staying there much longer. However, we were NEVER going to let that happen again and that meant saying goodbye to our first home together. We now live in a beautiful home in Hopkinton with our 4-month old baby boy and of course, our cat. I urge the town of Norwood to address this issue. After the storm, my husband and I drove around town during every rainstorm and cleared storm drains. We went to the Shaw's parking lot

during storms, where we believe the issue was with the poor drainage in the freshly paved parking lot, and just watched water spill onto our street. Every time it rained, we had flashbacks, PTSD, and we would spend the nights checking on the basement. Time passes and distance heals, but we will certainly never forget June 28th of 2020. Nature is unpredictable, sure. But certain things can be done to help future Norwood residents not have to go through what we went through. If we can help just one person with a letter, we sure will try. Thank you for reading our story.

-Anonymous

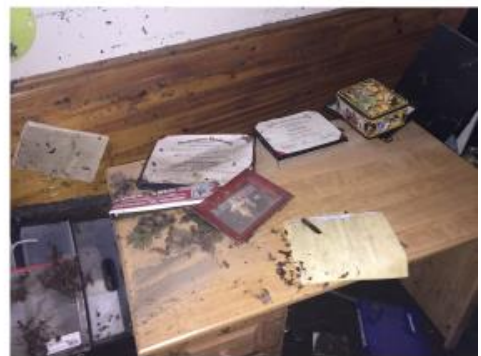
Before the storm:



Basement with 5ft of water



Damages



Deputy Chief John Cody and Fire Prevention Captain Jeff Campilio *As told to Holly Jones on October 26th, 2023*

I don't think people realize that there were multiple fires that night, and multiple calls for stranded vehicles". Deputy Chief Cody drove up from North Attleboro, where he was home and it was sunny, and went straight to Talbot Farm Rd for a fire call for a house that had been struck by lightning.

When he got to the house on Talbot Farm Rd, Captain Campilio, who was overseeing the hospital evacuation, called for backup: he had lost contact with two crewman in the hospital basement who were rescuing civilians. There ended up being six to six and a half feet of water in that basement. Deputy Chief Cody told the gentleman on Talbot Farm Road, "don't touch anything and be ready to evacuate your house" and left the house for the hospital. The two crewman ended up regaining contact and were accounted for by the time Deputy Chief Cody arrived at the hospital. He called a 2nd alarm to bring in mutual aid, and two ambulance task forces from the state who staged at the MBTA. He also called 30 metro SWAT police to help bring all of the patients out of the hospital, thinking that you could put 30 police on a bus and get them there more quickly than 30 firefighters 4 to a giant truck.

That night the fire department evacuated 120 people from the hospital by flashlight, including 9 people in the ICU who were brought down three flights of stairs on beds. They did it with no injuries.

The Fire Department received 75 emergency calls within the span of an hour. Getting around town was difficult. They lost 1 fire engine and 1 ambulance to the flood water.

Canton, Sharon, Westwood, Walpole, Norfolk and Stoughton Fire Departments responded to the scene for a second alarm to provide additional manpower. Many other agencies from the region assisted in the response including Foxboro, Dedham, Avon, Plainville, Millis, Providence, Boston, Somerville, Mansfield, Brewster, Hanson, Abington, Whitman, Brockton, East Bridgewater, Hanson, Norwell, Cohasset, Hanover, Hingham, Rockland, Kingston, Hanover, Needham, and more

Deputy Chief Cody emphasized that his biggest takeaway was just how hard the Norwood Fire Crews worked that night. As reinforcements came and he started to be able to cut his own crew, who were exhausted from carrying patients down the stairs, many Fire Fighters didn't want to leave.