

## 25 rescued from flood

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Lane stated Sheriff Chris Flynn drove up to Macedonia Road and walked down the steep hill toward the woman's house.

At first, the rescue squad planned to carry a boat over the hill where Flynn had walked. That's when they decided to remove the lady by the helicopter.

Flood victims stated the waters came up quickly, and many got out with only the clothes they had on. A few people stayed in their homes thinking that flood water had never gotten into their home before.

Lane said when people were rescued, they usually went to stay with friends or family members.

The Estill County Rescue Squad did not work alone. Many of the rescues in Estill County were done by BERT members.

Estill County is a member of the Bluegrass Emergency Response Team (BERT) which sent teams in from other counties to perform local rescues.

Lane said these groups used their equipment which the local rescue squad does not have.

Rescue workers worked many hours last week without sleep.

## Flooding worse than '39

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The equipment used to monitor the flood stage in Ravenna malfunctioned. Estimates are that the flood level may have been 44 feet.

This flood was sometimes compared to the flood of 1957.

Former Irvine Mayor Tom Williams recalled the flood of 1957. He is a retired National Guardsman. The Guards were called out to assist in that flood.

Williams was sent to Beattyville where he was in a row boat going down Main Street. The city had one traffic light, and he was able to touch it from the boat.

Now, everyone is saying the flood was worse than the flood of 1939.

Team Rubicon was returning to Estill County this week to work with flood relief. The team was here four years ago after straight line winds moved through the county on March 1, 2017.

March 2, 2021 was the anniversary of tornadoes which moved through Eastern Kentucky.

A statewide tornado drill was cancelled last week after the flooding occurred.

## River City Music Center collects and distributes flood cleaning supplies

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Two sisters drove down from Ohio in two separate cars, loaded down with supplies. One sister said they were from Estill County originally. She had been visiting here when the flood came.

One of the volunteers at River City was Faye Richardson, Jennifer's mother-in-law, who organized the supplies as they came in.

Faye's home was not flooded, but the Winchester Road in front of her house was closed due to flooding.

To get to River City each day to volunteer, she walked through the

woods to a neighbor's trailer. Her son, LG, picked her up and brought her to River City each day.

Sixth District U.S. Representative Andy Barr made his first stop in Estill County at River City music and Arts before looking at the flood damage.

Barr stated that as soon as the governor sends Washington his report on the floods, that federal help will be on its way to the flood victims.

Fifth District U.S. Representative Hal Rogers who represents Lee, Owsley, and Breathitt Counties had also toured those counties on Friday to see flood damages.

# Resident organizes a feeding station when Irvine was surrounded by water

There are many feeding operations going on following the flooding and cleanup in Estill County.

If you are a flood victim, an emergency worker, a volunteer, lost wa-

ter and/or power, or just needed a hot meal, you will get fed.

One of those places was at First Baptist Church on Broadway, where Dena Riddell Swim organized a

crew to prepare lunches.

She said she was just doing what her parents would have done.

Her father, Dwaine Riddell, started the Estill County Rescue Squad back in the 1970s. Swim said her father remained active with the rescue squad until about two years ago.

She said that when there were disasters, her mother, now deceased, cooked meals for the volunteers.

One of the volunteers was Swim's 85 year old, Doris Lethgo. She is better known as Aunt Doe.

Swim said the church's food pantry has been bare since the pandemic began.

Getting food supplies during the flood for the meals was a challenge to Swim and the other volunteers.

She said Irvine was like an island. All the main roads going into Irvine were underwater.

Swim said they could

go to the new Dollar General Store on Winchester Road. They made sure to leave enough food at the store for residents living within city limits.

She added that she and her volunteers checked their food pantries and freezers for items they could use in preparing the food.

The meals were served at the church, picked up, or delivered to emergency workers.

Because the fast food establishments are not located in Irvine, Swim's team also delivered meals to health care workers and employees at businesses, such as Dollar General.

One day First Baptist served spaghetti, and chili on another day. There were also brown bag lunches.

Swim said the Irvine Church of God was fixing a meal in the evenings.

Breakfasts were being prepared by Estill Springs staff.



Dena Swim labels packaged sandwiches during a lunch distribution last week at Irvine First Baptist Church.

## God's Outreach relocates temporarily

God's Outreach, a food pantry on Winchester Road, was one of the local businesses which was destroyed by flood last week.

The flooding may have destroyed as much as \$80,000 worth of food that was to be given out to needy people in Estill County.

The building was also damaged by the flooding, and Director Gary Powell is planning on moving the food pantry to another location.

But for now, food distribution is temporarily located in the parking lot of Irvine First Church of God on Broadway.

Flood waters were receding on Thursday while God's Outreach was in the parking lot and handing out food.

"We're not going to let the flood hinder us," Powell stated.

God's Pantry in Lexington put together the food boxes for all the flooded areas.

One box contained loose produce including apples, onions, green peppers and sweet potatoes. The other box had ricotta and shredded cheese, meat, hot dogs, a gallon of milk, and bags of apples and potatoes.

A bag of other groceries was also placed in each vehicle, along with a loaf of bread and a 24 pack of bottled water.

Powell said each Thursday from 9-12, God's Outreach will be



Michelle Embry loads food boxes into the truck of a car Thursday morning for God's Outreach. The non-profit was flooded at its building on Winchester Road and relocated in the parking lot of Irvine Church of God. Food distributions will be given out there on Thursdays and Fridays, 9 a.m. to noon.

distributing food boxes at the Church of God parking lot until they move into another building.

God's Outreach has been distributing about 750 boxes a month. On Thursday morning, word had not gotten out and picking up the food was slow.

Twelve gift certificates for \$40 each had been donated by Wen-

dell Combs, owner of the Irvine Save-A-Lot. Powell said that six certificates will be donated to Body of Christ Ministry and the other six to Restoration Church.

Powell said if a person was scheduled for a Friday pickup, they should also come on Thursday morning.

He said only about 10 percent of the donations to the food pantry

come from Estill County.

When God's Outreach started a few years ago, Powell said that Estill County was one of the lowest fed counties in America, according to Feeding America. Now, he said that Estill County is fully fed.

If you would like to donate or need food delivered, you may call (606) 614-9364.

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