

## Flood of 2008: Devastation came with a silver lining

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A year ago today, the skies over south-central Indiana were dumping enough rain to close state highways, wash out county roads, put homes and businesses under water and place people's lives in jeopardy.

A steady rain that started innocently enough the night before had turned into a very dangerous downpour by 1 p.m. last June 7. By that time, the Indiana State Police were asking area residents NOT to call them for traffic updates because they were too busy with emergencies and needed to keep their phone lines open. They were warning people to stay home unless travel was "extremely necessary."

Within the next hour, National Guard troops were called out to help in Morgan County, and by 2:30 p.m., no one could get in or out of Martinsville.

Dams were to fail, swamping lands below. The rain kept falling. Flood waters kept rising.

The result was a natural disaster of monumental proportions throughout our area. Gov. Mitch Daniels declared Monroe, Brown, Greene, Lawrence, Morgan and Owen counties disaster areas.

Some families lives are still not the same, even one year later. But there is a silver lining to the clouds that opened up that day.

A wide cross-section of community social service agencies, faith-based organizations, business groups and institutions joined forces under the leadership of United Way to create the Monroe County Long Term Recovery Committee. Financial assistance, construction materials, labor, housing replacements, mold removal and other help has been provided.

Besides the formal efforts, individuals donated thousands of dollars in cash and supplies to flood relief, and volunteers worked tirelessly to help in the cleanup.

No one ever wants to see the kind of devastation and disruption caused by the flood of 2008. But if something like that has to happen, it's good to know our community will pull together to help those most affected by it.