

STORM LEAVES MARK ON VILLAGE - Columbus Dispatch, The (OH) - August 12, 1987 - page 3

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Mother Nature walloped Victorian Village in the wee hours of Aug. 3.

She unleashed one of her deluxe three-way beatings that feature wind, thunder and lightning with a deluge thrown in to enhance the effect.

Maggie Kozelek, spokeswoman for the **Columbus** Recreation and Parks Department, told me that Victorian Village and Goodale Park took the brunt of Mother Nature's thrashing.

About 100 trees in Goodale Park alone, were destroyed or damaged in the storm.

It is quite a sight to see people trying to enjoy the park as they did before the storm - fishing, lolling in the grass, walking small children and dogs - in the shadows of enormous fallen limbs and trees.

Garner Workman, maintenance supervisor for the Recreation and Parks Department, said the city received between 600 and 650 storm-related calls reporting fallen or damaged trees.

When the city gets these calls, crews are sent out to replant trees and remove debris.

Replacing trees for Goodale Park and Victorian Village will probably cost the city nearly \$50,000 in overtime alone. It will take at least two weeks to replant trees in the area, Kozelek said.

The storm didn't spare houses and businesses either.

Driving down N. High St. on the morning of Aug. 3 before many business owners had arrived at their stores and offices, I saw several plate glass windows laying in shards on the sidewalk. Some of the distinctive awnings that decorate store fronts were turned into shredded cloth and twisted metal.

Everyone seems to have a storm story, too.

From what I hear, lightning striking houses was pretty common, and some incidents were serious. I have been told about everything from collapsed roofs and thousands of dollars worth of damage to air conditioning units being knocked out.

What is miraculous to me is that a lot of people weren't killed or seriously injured in the storm. There seemed to be a huge potential for disaster with so much going on. Had the storm occurred at a time when more people were out on the streets, we would have had a major tragedy in human terms.

The storm shook things up at Mt. Vernon Plaza, too, but even before the storm, things were shaking here in more benevolent ways.

TownHomes Management has been doing what it can to refurbish the plaza on a tight budget. When I leave my office in the plaza, I can smell the pungent odor of mulch in the brick planters and see flowers that were planted in preparation for the **Columbus Black Expo** last Saturday.

Many sources said that perhaps the most positive sign that things are being done to improve the plaza is the sound of silence. They said their telephones have stopped ringing with calls from tenants at the plaza with complaints.

TownHomes' tenure at the plaza was supposed to be temporary. U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge Barabara A. Sellers appointed the company manager of the complex, while several Chapter 11 reorganization cases are going through the court.

The plaza will probably be sold and the new owner will probably bring in a new management team.

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