

## Half-Foot of Rain Leaves City's Streets Flooded

By Ellie Sutter

In a 36-hour period from Wednesday through Thursday, more than a half-foot of rain soaked the metropolitan Oklahoma City area, leaving motorists swamped in streets roiled with earth-colored floodwater.

At about 6 a.m. Thursday, WKY Radio helicopter pilot Mike Rutledge gently landed his craft atop a mobile home three times to rescue three people stranded by rising floodwaters near NE 122 and Westminster.

Oklahoma City Fire Department spokesman Jon Hansen said rescuers

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at the scene had been warned by Oklahoma Gas and Electric officials not to put their metal rescue boats into the water because high-voltage transmission lines were down and sub-

merged.

"We were 200 yards away and couldn't do a thing," Hansen said.

In the downtown area, water undercut the northwest-bound Interstate 35/I-40 junction, snarling Thursday morning rush-hour traffic. The roadway was reopened late Thursday.

Nearly 70 eastern Oklahoma County homes were evacuated, and 75 more families were told to prepare to leave their homes because of flooding in the North Canadian River.

Fifty families from northeast Harrah spent the night in an elementary school after being evacuated about 10

p.m., assistant fire chief Paul Wiegert said.

In Jones, residents from 75 homes were placed on an evacuation alert after authorities were warned that the North Canadian would rise two feet above an earlier crest between midnight and 2 a.m.

Flooding Crutcho Creek in eastern Oklahoma County forced evacuation of 28 families from base housing at Tinker Air Force Base Wednesday night.

Bill Hall, Tinker spokesman, said it was the first such evacuation at the base in recent memory.

Water several inches deep on the floors forced the families to take refuge in a recreation hall on base where they were provided with cots and sleeping bags. However, they were allowed to return to their homes later Wednesday after the water subsided.

Hall said the rising floodwaters outpaced a sandbagging team which was attempting to build a dike to keep the flood from the housing area.

Residents of about 40 to 50 homes in Harrah were asked to evacuate Thursday night, Larry Brewer, duty officer at the State Emergency Operations Center, said. The homes were

east of SH 270 and south of SH 62.

They were housed in a Red Cross emergency shelter at the Harrah Elementary School, NE 10 and Harrah Road.

In Norman, water broke through the dam along the South Canadian River Thursday afternoon. About one-eighth mile of the dam was breached.

East Terminal Drive coming out of Will Rogers Airport was under water Thursday afternoon and traffic was rerouted through the parking lot of the Quality Inn.

The airport remained open, al-

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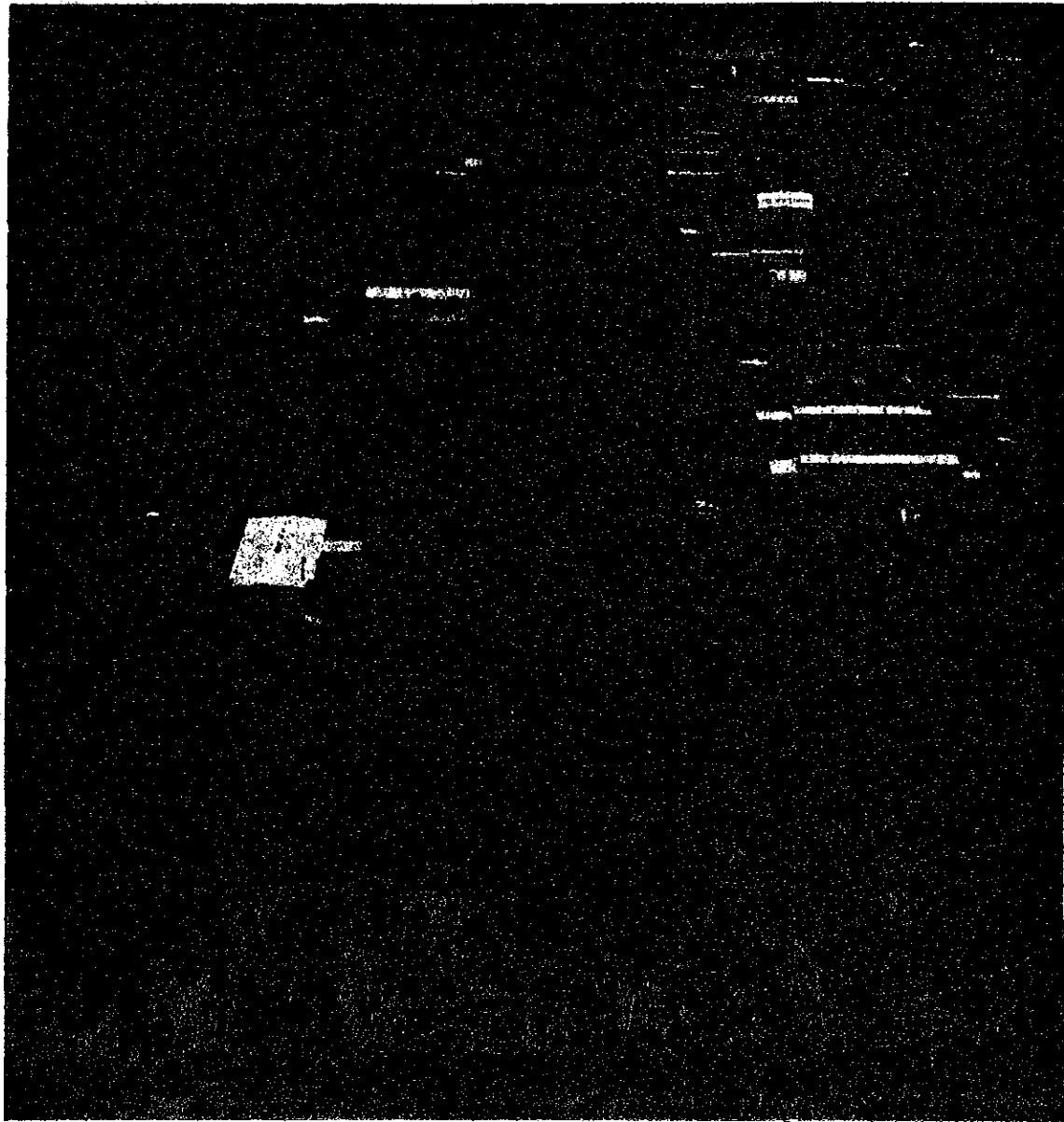
### North Sought Contra Help From Official

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former U.S. Ambassador Lewis A. Tambs testified Thursday that in 1985, while U.S. aid to Nicaraguan Contra rebels was banned, White House aide Oliver L. North ordered him to use his post in Costa Rica to help the rebels open a military front in Nicaragua.

"Mr. North was working for the National Security Council and obviously my assumption was that any instruction he gave me came from ... his superiors," Tambs said in responding to a question at the Iran-Contra hearings about why he followed orders from the Marine lieutenant colonel.

Tambs also said he was asked by North to help private efforts to resupply the Contras.

Earlier in the day, former CIA operative Felix L. Rodriguez told the House-Senate



## Bellmon Declares Flood Emergency

By Kathi Thacker

Gov. Henry Bellmon declared a state of emergency throughout Oklahoma Thursday while residents battled floodwaters left by up to 9 inches of rain in the past two days and watched in frustration as more poured from the skies.

Bellmon's declaration will allow officials to use any facilities "to protect life and property," said Sam Armstrong, the governor's press secretary.

In many areas of the state, there were mass evacuations, road closings and rescues as the lines of storms barged through.

Flash flood warnings were issued for 16 counties in central and southwest Oklahoma, and flash flood watches were posted for all but the northwest part of the state.

Numerous county roads and state highways were closed Thursday in southwest, central and north-central Oklahoma when they were washed away or covered by high water.

Southwest Oklahoma received 5 to 7 inches of rain Wednesday night and an additional 5 to 8 inches by Thursday afternoon, the National Weather Service said.

Heavy thunderstorms crossing central Oklahoma at mid-afternoon Thursday dropped 1 inch of rain in 25 minutes at Will Rogers World Airport.

By Thursday night, the weather service reported the heaviest thunderstorms were in eastern Oklahoma, and moderate to light rain covering central

## 2 Children Lose Lives In Flooding

By Ellie Sutter

Two-year-old Jennifer Moore lost her grip on the tree where her mother had placed her after their car was swept from the road into a rain-swollen creek in northeast Oklahoma County Wednesday night.

Sometime during the next two dark, cold, rainy hours, Jennifer fell into the floodwaters and drowned.



by the Contras. After in the day, CIA operative Alex I. Rodriguez told the House-Senate hearings that he broke with the clandestine re-supply operation for the rebels — run by North — after becoming disgusted with overcharges, bribery and deliveries of unreliable ammunition.

After Rodriguez completed his testimony, one of the legislators probing the affair referred to the managers North recruited for the supply network as "thieving scoundrels," adding to the debate over whether those aiding the rebels were patriots or profiteers.

Tambs, who was ambassador to Costa Rica from 1985 until last January and is now a history professor at Arizona State University, gave the committees the first direct evidence of a State Department official helping the rebels during the two-year congressional ban on U.S. military aid to the Contras.

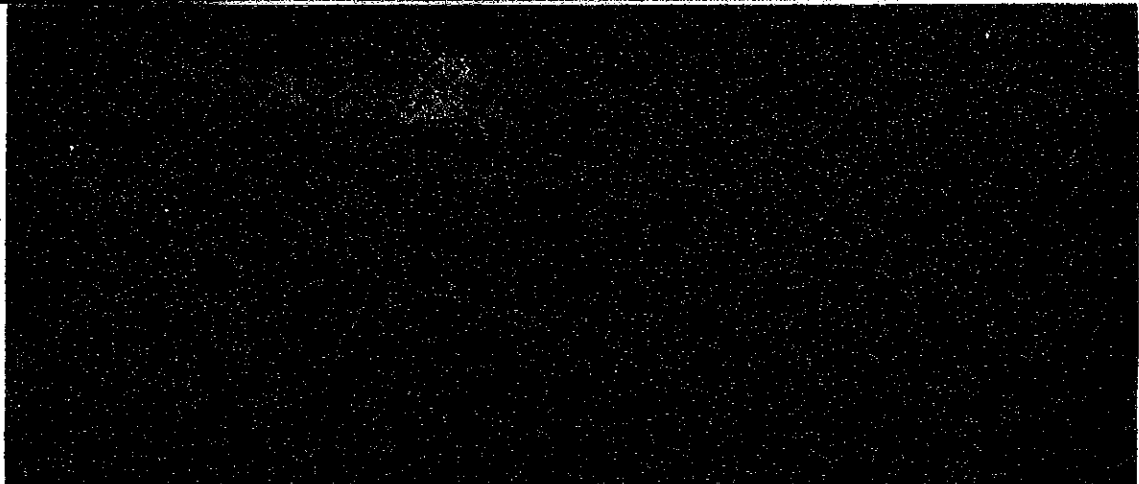
He said he did not question the legality of his instructions, which came from a small, inter-agency group that included North, then a member of the National Security Council staff, the head of the CIA's Central American task force and Elliott Abrams, who was awaiting Senate confirmation as assistant secretary of state for Central American affairs.

When pressed on the point, Tambs said, "They have a saying in the Foreign Service: When you take the king's shilling you do the king's bidding."

He dismissed questions about whether he should have sought a legal opinion from the State Department or White House about undertaking the operation.

"You can't really expect people in the field to be constitutional lawyers. ... The people in

See CONTRA, Page 2



Red, muddy water pours out of the banks of the Washita River Thursday to inundate Lindsay in south-central Oklahoma. This aerial photo is looking north along State Highway 76. The river, at the bottom, is south of town. At center left is the town's power plant.

### Massive Manhunt Ends in Motel

## Missouri Fugitive Caught in Ada



David Brown

**By Ray Robinson**  
Missouri fugitive John David Brown, who was the subject of the largest manhunt in that state's history, was in the Oklahoma County jail Thursday following his arrest by FBI agents and police officers at an Ada motel.

Brown, 32, was arrested at about 3 a.m. at the Raintree Motel after lawmen surrounded the motel and evacuated

about half of its occupants. He was jailed in Oklahoma City on a federal complaint of interstate flight to avoid prosecution, but was then turned over to the Oklahoma County sheriff's office to await extradition to Missouri.

Officers said John David Brown, 32, had a bullet wound in his upper thigh when he was arrested at the Raintree Motor Inn in Ada.

"I don't know where or when, but he's been wounded," said Oklahoma County Deputy Sheriff's Capt. Albert Johnson. "I would estimate the wound is two or three weeks old."

Prosecutors in Phelps County, Mo., have charged Brown with wounding a Rolla police officer who was gunned down on March 30 while investigating a suspi-

See FUGITIVE, Page 2

## Vote by Absent Lawmaker Opposed

**By Chris Casteel**

A state House member charged Thursday that votes were being cast for an absent lawmaker and that one of the votes doomed an effort to repeal the controversial prevailing wage law.

Rep. Ken McKenna, R-Moore, said a member of the House had been violating House rules by voting for Tulsa Democrat Kevin Easley. McKenna asked for an investigation of the matter and a rehearing on any bills on which Easley's vote made a difference.

Easley said later that he had been right outside the House chamber on Thursday morning and had motioned

to other members on how he wanted his vote to be cast. That procedure is allowable under House rules. However, no member said he or she had voted for Easley.

Easley said he could not remember who voted for him.

House Speaker Jim Barker, D-Muskogee, said he would "try to determine who operated Mr. Easley's voting machine and take the appropriate action."

Some members said it is common for votes to be cast for members who are not in the chamber and visible to the presiding officer, as the rule requires.

But McKenna and other lawmakers

made it an issue Thursday after a 48-47 vote against an amendment to repeal the prevailing wage law, which requires that wages on certain public construction projects be in line with wages in the area on private construction projects. Easley's vote was cast to table the amendment.

Easley did not answer the 10 a.m. roll call, but his vote showed up on the first three bills considered.

After the vote on the prevailing wage amendment, Rep. Bill Clark first raised the point about voting for other members.

Rep. Charlie Morgan, who was presiding over the House, admonished members to observe the rules, and

at midafternoon Thursday dropped 1 inch of rain in 25 minutes at Will Rogers World Airport.

By Thursday night, the weather service reported the heaviest thunderstorms were in eastern Oklahoma, and moderate to light rain covering central Oklahoma from Newkirk near the Kansas border to Ryan near the Texas border.

A severe thunderstorm Thursday night produced nickle-sized hail at Soper and dime-sized hail at Antlers.

More thunderstorms were expected to develop across the state Thursday night as an upper-level system made its way northeastward from New Mexico.

### Pauls Valley Area

While much of the state has been getting too much water, Pauls Valley residents are being warned that they are about to run out of it.

City manager Bob Martin said a water line supplying the Pauls Valley water treatment plant washed out late Wednesday, leaving the city with only its reserves of treated water.

Martin estimated that Pauls Valley has about 2½ million gallons of treated water in reserve, enough to last about two days, "barring fires and broken lines."

Martin said he is warning residents to "be prudent" with water until the line is fixed.

### Lawton Area

Lawton was among the communities evacuating residents in areas of rising floodwaters.

Swollen Cache Creek forced evacuation of 90 to 100 homes in the Garden Village housing addition in northeast Lawton late Wednesday and Thursday.

Lawton city employees were transporting residents in vans and dump trucks across the flooded road that provides the only access to Garden Village.

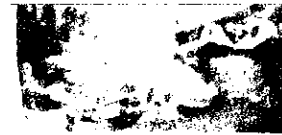
Meanwhile, other homeowners in the addition were lining their property with sandbags to stem the rising water, Comanche County Civil Defense director Richard Atkins said.

In the neighboring Turtle Creek addition, residents nervously watched rising creek waters and packed belongings in case of evacuation.

Mike Shaw, a spokesman for the Lawton public works department, compared the flooding to the extensive flood of 1983, when 16 inches of rain fell in three days. "Right now, we're at that level," he

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Sometime during the next two dark, cold, rainy hours, Jennifer fell into the floodwaters and drowned.



Jennifer Moore

Earlier that night, a 14-year-old Dibble boy drowned when he was swept into a flooded creek near his hometown.

Jennifer Moore and her brother Blu, 8, and her sister, Sara, 6, were riding home with their mother, Elizabeth Moore, to Blanchard after a trip to Jones to visit their grandparents, Frank and Reba Miller.

Oklahoma City Fire Department spokesman Jon Hansen commended

Elizabeth Moore for her frantic efforts to save her children.

"She did a great job. She got the three kids out of the car and got them into trees," he said.

Hansen said the west-bound car went off NE 122 near Sooner Road about 10 p.m. About two hours later, Bill Hanson, who had just gotten off work at the tollgate of the Turner Turnpike, was driving slowly through the water

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## Inside

### Weatherline®

Call 524-3377 for local reports, forecasts. A 24-hour Oklahoman and Times service.

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# Washita River Floods Lindsay; 600 Evacuated

By Ebby Trammell

LINDSAY — The Washita River, swollen by two days of heavy rainfall, flooded this town of 3,400 Thursday, forcing more than 600 people, including nursing home and hospital patients, to evacuate to higher ground.

The muddy floodwaters, in places 5 feet deep, swirled into at least 55 homes and some 35 businesses, Civil Defense director Allen Wilson said.

Fire chief Bob Shelton, a 20-year veteran, said it was the worst flooding in the town's history.

Authorities said there were no reported injuries, but property damage appeared extensive in the south and east sections of town.

High water closed State Highway 76 to the south and SH 19 to the east early Thursday.

"My stuff is ruined," said unemployed oil-field worker Carl Tecumseh, 28, who inspected his flooded home by boat late Thursday. "When it dries out, I'll just load it up and haul it to the dump."

City manager Cliff Green said this Garvin County town was bracing for more rain and higher water Thursday night.

A small army of volunteers — adults, teen-agers and children — worked throughout the day at a vacant lot near the fire department filling sand bags.

Overhead, dark clouds boiled, frequently releasing heavy rain, thunder and lightning.

Most Main Street stores were sandbagged against the possibility of flooding as waters by late afternoon reached within a block of the central business district.

The National Weather Service's flood gauge on the Washita River at Alex, 12 miles upstream from here, showed a depth of 22.18 feet and rising at 5 p.m., authorities said. Normal flood stage is 19 feet.

City Clerk Linda Newby said that in 1983, the Washita flooded at a record depth of 24 feet. She said the National Weather Service had warned that depths of 27 to 28 feet are possible from the latest storms.

Mayor Virgil Henson lost 50 head of cattle and his pickup truck to the swollen Washita, Newby said. Authorities reported several vehicles submerged.

Rescue workers started the evacuation at 2 a.m. Thursday, using used boats to move some 40 people, including Cathy Hamit and her three teen-age children and one of their teen-age friends, to higher ground.

"The water came up so fast, there was no where to go," Hamit, a registered nurse, said. "Water was up to the hood of my son's pickup and inside our house."

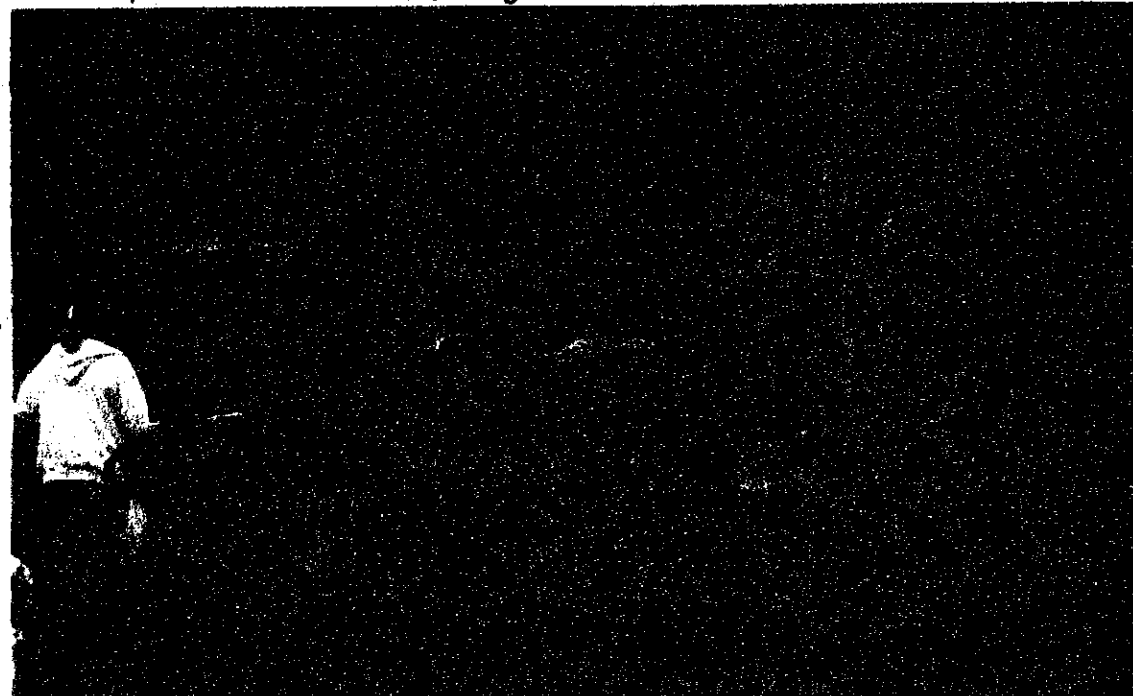
She said the family left eight cats in an upstairs bathroom and freed five dogs from their kennel. "What were we to do with them?" she asked.

Her husband, Bus Hamit, manager of the local Oklahoma Natural Gas office, said some 500 of the area's 2,250 customers had lost gas service.

City manager Green said Lindsay's water treatment plant was under water and out of service. But he said the community water tower was full and if



Swirling floodwaters force the evacuation of residents in Lindsay, as shown in this aerial photograph.



## Canadian County Homes Evacuated; Flooding Due

By Ann DeFrango

Some Canadian County residents were evacuated from their homes Wednesday night and although area creeks had receded Thursday morning, county officials said new rain might cause more evacuations.

The National Weather Service predicted the North Canadian River near El Reno, which has a flood stage of 12 feet, would crest late Thursday at 15 to 16 feet.

Ray Rush, at El Reno Civil Defense, said some rural homes were evacuated Wednesday night and officials were contacting others in flood-prone areas.

er their banks, he said.

Rush said Thursday's rains would be "almost all runoff; the ground won't soak in anymore."

Capt. Rick Baxter of the Yukon Police Department said police took trucks Thursday morning to help evacuate about six families in the area between Mustang Road and Wagner Road northeast of town.

He said Thursday morning he measured water 8 inches deep flowing across Piedmont Road in that vicinity.

Rush said a major problem of his office has been sightseers who hear about flooded areas and "try to drive

area's 2,250 customers had lost gas service. City manager Green said Lindsay's water treatment plant was under water and out of service. But he said the community water tower was full and if residents are conservative it will provide adequate water for three to four days.

Green said it's unknown if the plant has been damaged.

Debbie Boles, administrator at the Lindsay Care Center, said 60 elderly residents — a majority in wheelchairs or bedfast — were evacuated.

School buses and National Guard trucks were used to transport the residents to makeshift facilities in the local Elks' Lodge and the area rural electric cooperative's offices.

The residents, many mentally or physically handicapped, were pushed to waiting vehicles in wheelchairs with blankets thrown over their heads to protect them from the rain.

National Guardsmen from the Battery A 1st Battalion 160th Field Artillery at Pauls Valley lifted the wheel-chaired patients into 2½-ton covered trucks.

As they worked, floodwaters were visible less than a half-mile from the nursing home. Guardsmen also were directing traffic and helping patrol evacuated areas.

Lindsay Municipal Hospital nursing director Linda Copeland said 10 patients were evacuated to a Norman hospital while eight other hospital patients were released to relatives.

The hospital's doors were sandbagged. Emergency shelters were set up at several churches in the Murray Hills area in northwest Lindsay. Senior citizen volunteers were providing free food for rescue workers and those displaced from their homes.



Spectators look at a new "lake" created as the North Canadian River floods at Westminster Road, just south of Memorial.

# Governor Promises Flood Aid for Guthrie

By Ellen Kulekmeier  
GUTHRIE — Gov. Henry Bellmon pledged emergency aid for west-side Guthrie residents fleeing one of the worst in a long history of floods Thursday.

"Governor, we've got it as bad as we've had it," Mayor Speedy Weems told Bellmon, who had arrived by Air National Guard helicopter and met with residents Thursday afternoon. "It's 2 feet above what we had in

October," when record rains fell, the mayor said.

Bellmon encouraged homeowners to surrender their chronic struggle against flood-prone Cottonwood Creek.

The flooded creek prevented Bellmon's helicopter from landing at a west-side school where 85 evacuees prepared to bed down for their second night away from home.

Emergency workers

relied on boats to ferry supplies to the stranded shelter. Red Cross officials obtained cots from Kansas, after the state supply was expended on flood victims in Chickasha.

"We had them on blankets on the floor the night before," Guthrie civil defense director Jim Dixon said.

Cottonwood Creek washed far out of its banks after up to 9 inches of rain fell late Wednesday, prompting

the evacuation of 38 families in its floodplain. Guthrie is home to about 10,000 people.

The creek, which city officials said is normally 5 to 6 feet deep, crested at 27 feet Thursday afternoon.

The Cimarron River to the north was nearly 2 feet above flood stage Thursday afternoon, and Bird Creek to the east lapped at the steps of homes.

More heavy rain later Thursday threatened to worsen the situation.

Bellmon promised state assistance in applying for federal disaster aid and said the state would render all possible aid in road and bridge repair.

Weems took the governor to a second shelter in a comparatively lightly hit part of town and to a blocked-off viaduct over Cottonwood Creek. West of where the governor and mayor stood, stranded residents stared at the entrance across hundreds of feet of mud-

dy water. Weems told Bellmon the stubborn floodplain residents were among nearly 30 remaining targets of a permanent relocation program. Forty-six homes around Cottonwood Creek have been purchased with federal funds in the past two years, Weems said.

"Maybe something like this will give us leverage ... to pressure them to cooperate and let us purchase their property," Weems said.

Bellmon said it was to the mayor's credit that something permanent is already being done.

"If we can help you get that flood plain bought up, let us know," Bellmon said.

But Dixon said homeowners who have endured previous floods may well endure this one.

"It's their home," he said. "Once the water gets down, they'll get back in there, clean it back up and move back in."



Gov. Henry Bellmon watches rising water from a bridge in Guthrie.

## Guardsmen Aid Flood Victims

Gov. Henry Bellmon requested the Oklahoma National Guard Thursday to help local authorities in flooded areas.

Oklahoma Army National Guardsmen and vehicles were pressed into service to assist in evacuation and traffic control in flooded areas in Chickasha and Lindsay.

The first guardsmen and equipment were sent to Chickasha Wednesday night. By early

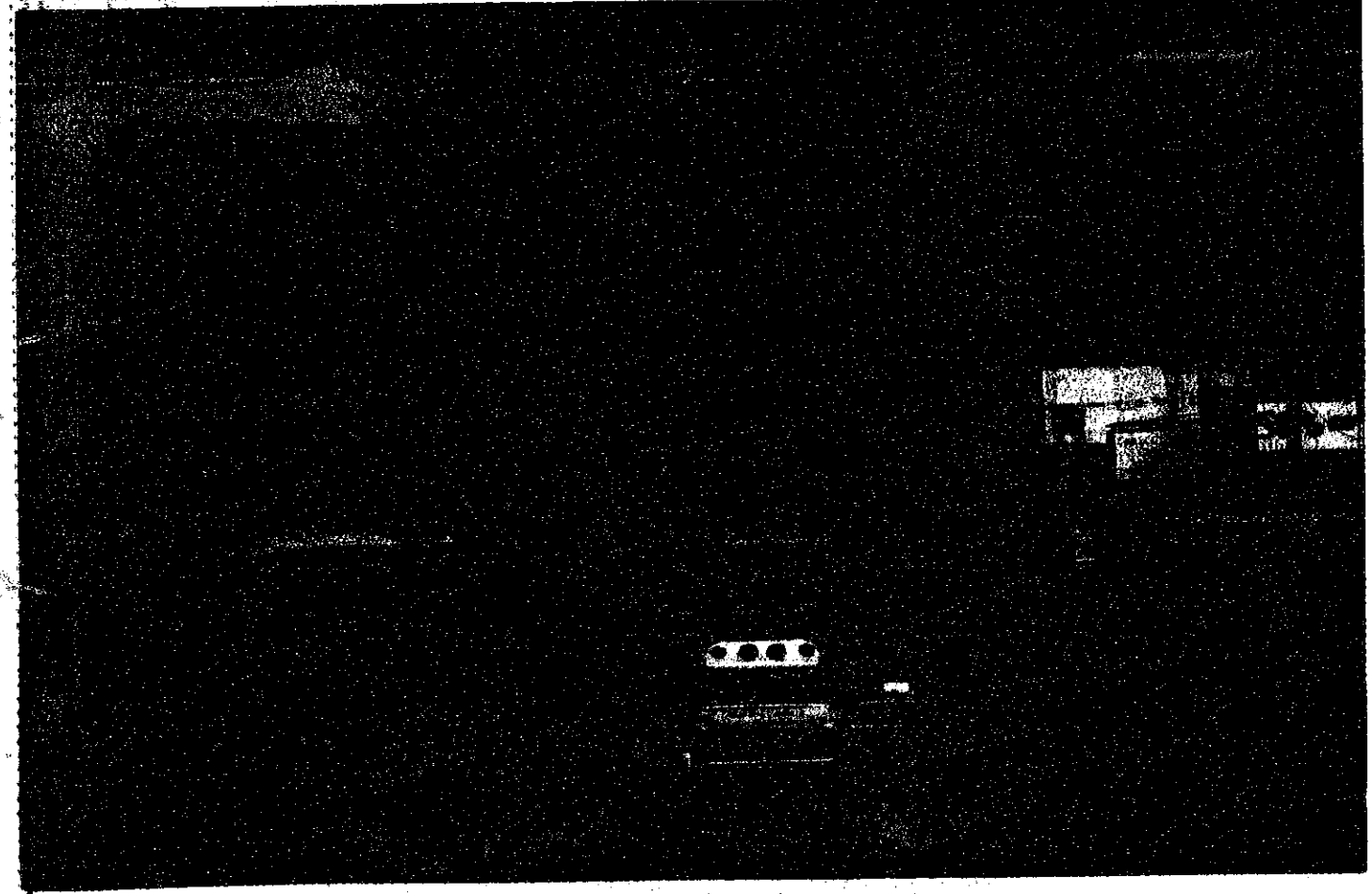
Thursday, 19 Guard members and six 5-ton trucks were in Chickasha to help evacuate residents and man road blocks in flooded areas, Lt. Col. Paul Robinson, Guard military support officer, said.

Twenty guardsmen and five, 5-ton trucks were sent to Lindsay about 10 a.m. Thursday, and in the afternoon 20 people and four more 5-ton trucks were sent, Robinson said.

The Guard also had four other members hauling Red Cross blankets from Anadarko and Duncan to Chickasha, Robinson said.

About 3:30 p.m., the Guard opened its armory in Walters as a shelter for people forced from their homes, he said.

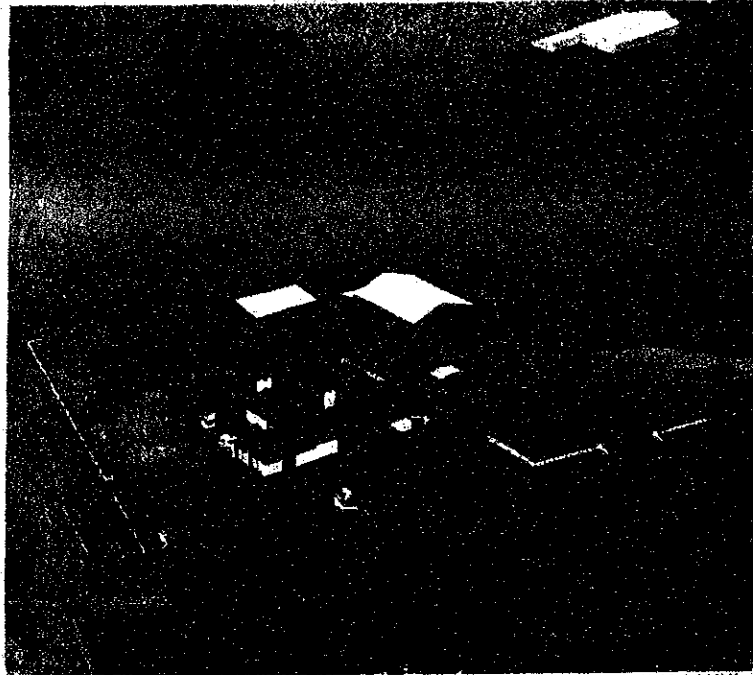
"What we are doing is just making sure where our assets are and trying to prepare for the worst," Robinson said.



Guthrie residents watch as Cottonwood Creek overflows its banks, flooding residential streets.

# Floodwaters Block Streets, Inundate Homes

## Torrential Rains Put Many County Roads Underwater



A farmhouse near Lindsay is isolated by the waters of the overflowing Washita River.

Several state roads and highways were closed Thursday after torrential rains created burdens on streams and rivers in the state. The Oklahoma Highway Patrol warned that most county roads are underwater across the state. The following road closings were reported late Thursday:

- Central Oklahoma**
- Canadian County: Highway 152 in Mustang, Highway 66 east of El Reno and Highway 81 south of Union City.
- Garvin County: Highway 19 for 10 miles between Lindsay and Maysville. The state Department of Transportation is watching U.S. 77 south of Paoli, which is open but has two to three inches of water across the highway.
- Grady County: Highway

- 19 at Alex and Bradley, Highway 19C north out of Alex, Highway 9 at the Grady-Caddo county line at Verden, U.S. 62 in Chickasha, and Highway 37 from Highway 76 to Interstate 44.
- Logan County: Highway 74 near Deer Creek and U.S. 77 north of Guthrie to the Cimarron River bridge.
- McClain County: Highway 74B west of Cole, Highway 77 and Highway 39 west of Purcell, Highway 76 south of Lindsay, and Highway 19 between Maysville and Lindsay.
- Oklahoma County: State Department of Transportation officials said the Interstate 35-40 junction that was closed most of Thursday will be open to traffic today. Authorities closed the road about 10 p.m. Wednesday after heavy rains

- eroded its foundation.
- North-Central Oklahoma**
- Kay County: Highway 77 north of Tonkawa, Highway 177 north of Blackwell, Highway 60 east of Tonkawa and Highway 156 south of U.S. 60.
- South-Central Oklahoma**
- Jefferson County: U.S. 81 north of the Red River.
- Stephens County: Highway 53 west of Comanche, Highway 7 at Big Beaver Creek, Highway 29 east of Marlow (east of Wrights Corner) and most of the county roads.
- Carter County: Highway 76 north of Healdton.
- Pontotoc County: Highway 1 and 14th Street junction in Ada.
- Love County: Highway 32, 10 miles west of Marietta.

- Southwest**
- Caddo County: U.S. 62 south of Apache and U.S. 152 at Highway 58. There is water on the road five miles east of Fort Cobb and the bridge is out on Highway 9 between Carnegie and Mountain View.
- Comanche County: Highway 65 north of Pumpkin Center and Highway 65 south of Highway 7 to Temple, and the bridge on Big Beaver Creek, 1½ miles east of Highway 65.
- Other Comanche County closings are: U.S. 277 between Porter Hill and Elgin, U.S. 62 between Porter Hill and Apache at Chandler Creek, and Highway 7 at approximately 1½ miles east of Highway 65/Pumpkin Center.
- Cotton County: Highway 5A east of Walters, Highway 5B at the bridge north of Taylor, junction of highways 65 and 53.

- Highway 5A at Beaver Creek has water over the roadway. Also closed was Highway 53 east and west of Walters, Highway 65 between Highway 7 and Highway 53.
- Harmon County: U.S. 62 from 1 mile east of Hollis to the state line.
- Jackson County: U.S. 283 has water running across the road north of Blair and U.S. 62 has water running across the road west of Altus. The highway patrol reports that secondary roads were totally water-covered.
- Kiowa County: Highway 19 east of Blair in the Warren area and west of Roosevelt was closed when the road was washed out.
- Tillman County: Highway 54 south of Hollister, Highway 36 from the Walters Y to Grandfield.

## Storm

From Page 1

said. Shaw estimated that some parts of Lawton have received 14½ inches of rain in the last two days.

Street department employees have been working around the clock to barricade flooded streets and reroute traffic, he said. Numerous streets in Lawton remained impassable Thursday.

East of Lawton, a portion of State Highway 7 was closed when a bridge over Big Beaver Creek washed out. And a northbound entrance ramp to Interstate 44 from SH 7 was covered with floodwaters from Cache Creek.

Flooded roads closed the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge north of Lawton Thursday, officials said.

**Duncan Area**

In Duncan, a mobile home park near flooded Willow Creek was evacuated Wednesday night, along with other homes near the creek, police chief Dale Anderson said.

Wednesday night or Thursday, evacuations of small numbers of homes were reported in the Grady County community of Alex; the town of Mountain Park in Kiowa County; Chickasha; and the Jackson County community of Headrick.

**Kingfisher Area**

Remembering some of their neighbors standing on rooftops waiting to be rescued by helicopter from rising floodwaters in years past, people in low-lying areas of Dover evacuated their houses Thursday in anticipation

rural homes, authorities said Thursday night.

High water encircled about 30 houses in the eastern part of Blackwell and surrounded the small Grant County town of Jefferson.

Authorities said no homes were believed to be underwater late Thursday although additional rainfall could cause more flooding.

About half of Jefferson's 100 residents remained in town to wait out the weather while in Blackwell the flooding Chikaskia River crested Thursday about 4 feet above flood stage, authorities said.

Meanwhile, rushing floodwaters of the Salt Fork of the Arkansas River, which was rising above flood stage late Thursday, washed out two dikes that were completed just days earlier.

Charles Conaghan, civil defense director for Tonkawa, said the two earthen dikes, one 12 feet high, were built to protect farmland after last fall's record flooding. No houses flooded as a result of the dikes' collapse, he said.

In Tonkawa, authorities discovered that lightning caused a fire Wednesday at the Farmers Cooperative grain elevator, Conaghan said.

Investigators discovered that wheat inside a 30,000-bushel bin still was hot as a result of the fire, forcing officials to punch a hole about midway up the 120-foot elevator to spill the wheat onto the ground to reduce the chance of an explosion or another



## Railroad Washed Out Near Purcell

Santa Fe Railway officials closed tracks near Purcell Thursday after floodwaters from the Walnut River washed away ballast along the rail bed.

Assistant superintendent Bill Bowen said 200 feet of track were reported washed out about 4 a.m. Thursday, south of Purcell where the track crosses the river.

Bowen said even after the Walnut receded, the South Canadian began to back up into it, stopping repair work on the tracks.

"The water was over the rail. We couldn't touch it. We just sat and watched."

Two section crews with heavy road equipment worked through the night pouring limestone rock under the rails. Bowen said he expected the repairs to be finished this morning if overnight rain was not too heavy.

bers standing on rooftops waiting to be rescued by helicopter from rising floodwaters in years past, people in low-lying areas of Dover evacuated their houses Thursday in anticipation of advancing floodwaters from the Cimarron River and Turkey Creek.

But any flooding Thursday night was prevented when predicted thunderstorms missed Kingfisher and areas west and north that drain into the Cimarron River.

"We're all going to try to relax and get a good night's sleep," Howard Watson, Kingfisher County's civil defense director, said. "We won't have any problems until it rains some more."

Twelve families in the western bottoms of Dover and another eight or nine families southwest of town moved out of their houses Thursday, Dover police chief Carl Lane said.

Another 50 people were standing by to evacuate their houses if more rain developed, he said.

The Cimarron River crested Thursday about 1 foot above flood stage, Watson said, but Turkey Creek, which feeds into the Cimarron, was rising Thursday night.

While Uncle John and Kingfisher creeks, which cause flooding problems in the northern part of Kingfisher, were well below flood stage late Thursday, it would not take long for them to start backing up if heavy rainstorms materialize, Watson said.

"Kingfisher will flood, too, if we get it all at once," he said.

#### North-Central Area

Farther north, the Salt Fork of the Arkansas River continued to rise, flooding an electric substation south of Tonkawa and threatening several

was hot as a result of the fire, forcing officials to punch a hole about midway up the 120-foot elevator to spill the wheat onto the ground to reduce the chance of an explosion or another fire, Conaghan said.

About \$20,000 worth of wheat was lost, he said.

Red Cross emergency relief teams had opened shelters in eight Oklahoma towns by 7 p.m. Thursday and were prepared to open more if necessary.

"We probably have had 350 to 400 people in and out of our shelters today," said Diane Fuller, director of operations for the Oklahoma Red Cross relief effort.

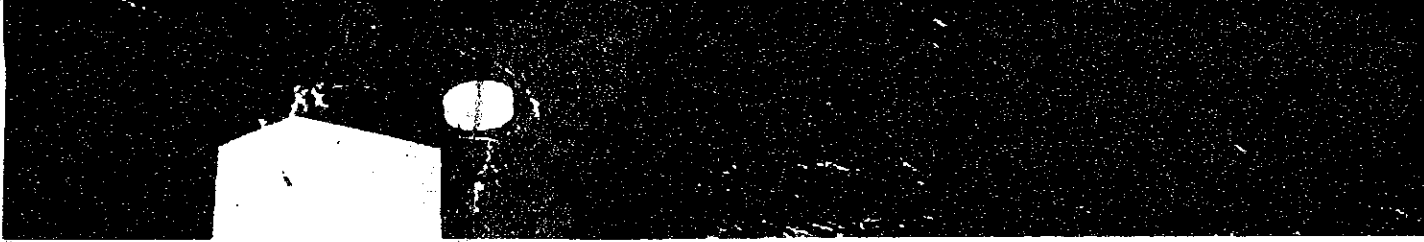
Shelters were opened at the Chickasha and Comanche Senior Citizens Nutrition Centers; the Lawton Multi-Purpose Center; Cotteral Elementary School and the Presbyterian Fellowship Hall in Guthrie; the Pauls Valley High School gymnasium; Jones High School; and the municipal building, school gym and several area churches in Lindsay.

Another shelter was opened somewhere in Walters and the Red Cross was preparing to open shelters in Jackson County, Cleveland County and Jefferson County, if necessary, Fuller said.

The rain-swollen North Canadian River filled Lake Overholser and Lake Hefner in Oklahoma City to capacity in recent days, forcing reservoir officials to channel overflow around the lakes, manager Dean Jones said.

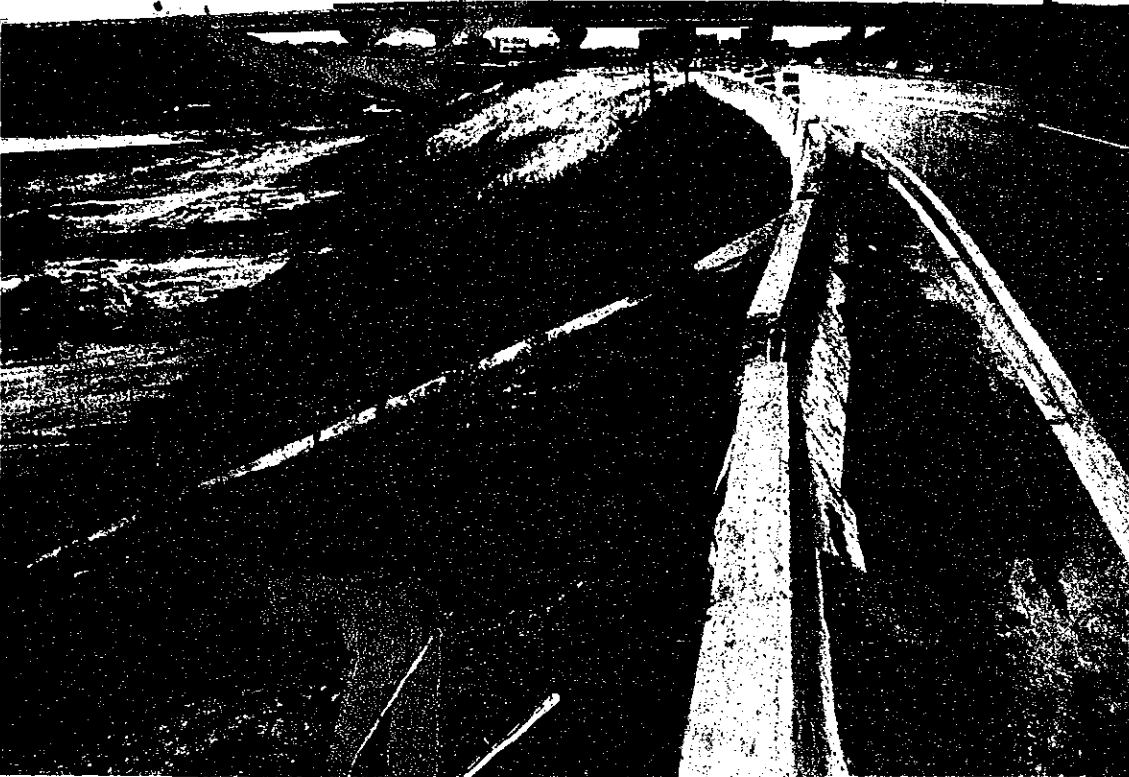
Earlier this spring, the water level at both lakes was down 4 to 5 feet below full capacity.

Reporters Chris Kinyon, Randy Ellis and Ann DeFrance contributed to this report.



Once released from its bank, the Washita River in south-central Oklahoma begins rushing over farmland.

— Staff Photo by Al McLaughlin

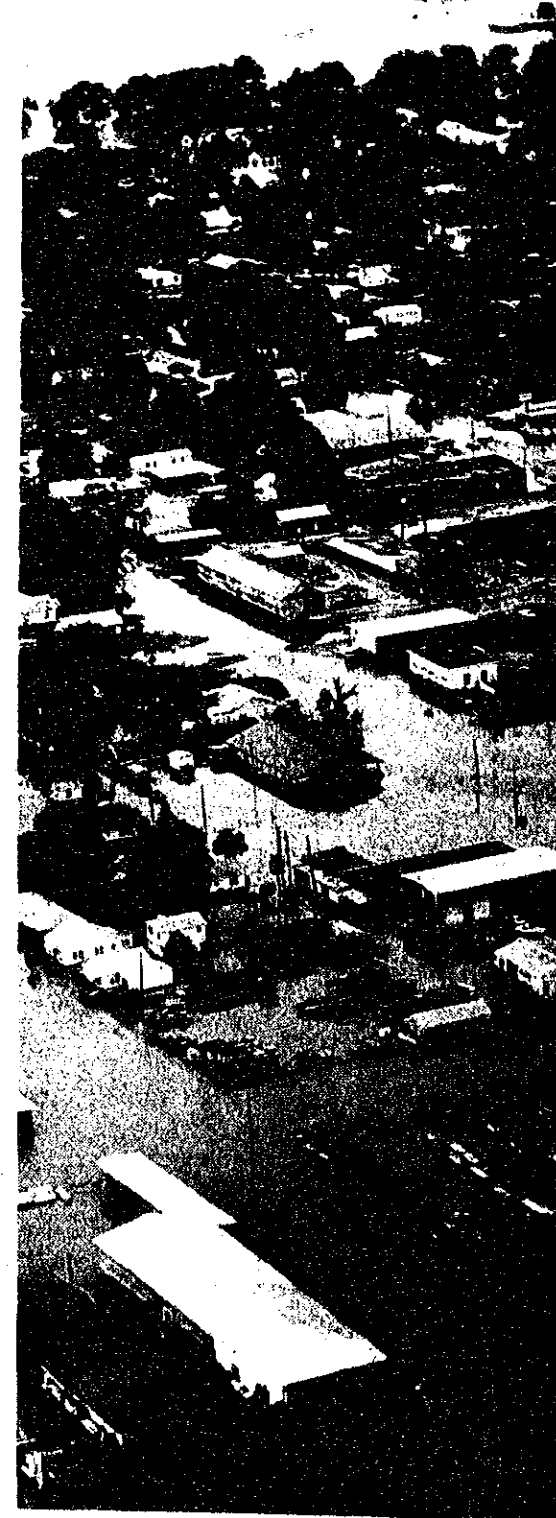


— Staff Photo by Roger Kleck

Heavy rains open a large hole in the off ramp near the intersection of Interstates 40 and 35 near downtown Oklahoma City.

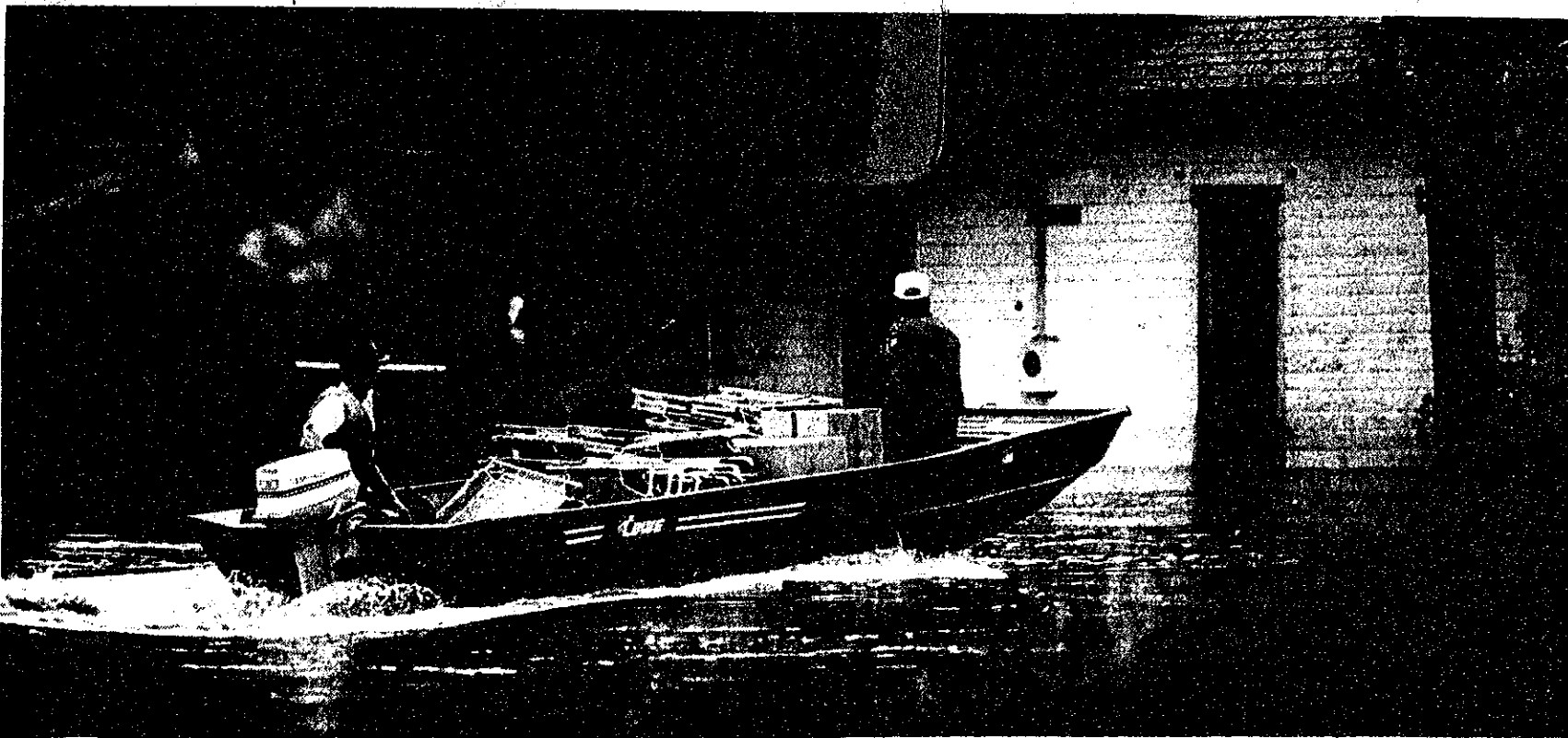
der the rails. Bowen said he expected the repairs to be finished this morning if overnight rain was not too heavy.

Some trains Thursday were rerouted through Amarillo, Texas. Some used Union Pacific lines to Kansas City, Bowen said.



— Staff Photo by Al McLaughlin

From the air, Lindsay looks like a little Venice with streets now waterways.



A boat checks on possible stranded residents in Guthrie.

— Staff Photo by Paul S. Howell