

TODAY'S EDITORIAL PAGE
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ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

FINAL

Closing Stock Market Prices
Pages 8C and 9C

Vol. 89 No. 24 (89th Year) © 1967, St. Louis Post-Dispatch ST. LOUIS, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 1967—72 PAGES W PRICE 7c BY GREATER ST. LOUIS 1.85 A MONTHLY DAILY BY CARRIER

TORNADO HERE KILLS 2, INJURES 217

**HEAVY DAMAGE
TO BUSINESSES,
HOMES, POWER
AND GAS LINES**

Storm Hits in West
County and Travels
Northeast, Striking
Many Areas

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH FINAL

 Closing Stock Market Prices
 Pages 17D and 18D
 PRICE 7c BY GREATER ST. LOUIS 1.85 A MONTHLY DAILY BY CARRIER

**STORM LOSS ESTIMATED
 AT \$10,000,000 OR MORE;
 168 HOUSES DESTROYED**

**MAJOR DAMAGE
 TO 258 HOMES,
 SURVEY AFTER
 TORNADO SHOWS**

1485 Other Resi-
 dences Hit—Johnson
 Is Asked to Declare
 County Disaster Area

**Compiled by Kathy Goldner, summer of 1995,
resident at 123 Ridgecrest.**

The summer of 1995 was hot and humid for weeks on end. This research was a welcome indoor project. I was delighted with the neighbors I was able to meet. People remembered their experience as if it were yesterday and generously shared their slides and pictures. Special thanks to the Chapmans and Hank Dahm for their slides and contribution on the area where the tornado first entered River Bend; to Ray Boston and Herb Schmidt for their contribution on the Shady Valley section; to Dick Snyder, Ethel and Roland Dunlop for their photos for the River Bend / River Valley area, one of the hardest hit areas; to Rob and Gerda Burt for the section on Henning, and Loren Forrester for his contributions at the exit point for the tornado on Southdown.

There are still people to contact and new neighbors to meet. Hope to hear more first hand experiences as the time progresses.

Residents reported 'lost' porches, columns and garage damage, most of which can be contributed to the high winds that accompany the destruction of the main path. Neighbors related that nails were pulled from their roof and the roof left intact, nails raised on the wall boards inside their home, roofs raised and then gently settled back down, objects imbedded in trees and penetrating walls . . . fascinating . . . the forces of *Mother Nature*.



A TORNADO HIT ST. LOUIS COUNTY ON JANUARY 24, 1967.

ON JANUARY 24, 1967, A STRONG TORNADO RIPPED A PATH OF DESTRUCTION 21 MILES LONG ACROSS ST. LOUIS COUNTY. IT LIKELY RANKS AS THE FOURTH WORST TORNADO IN HISTORY TO HIT THE ST. LOUIS AREA, FOLLOWING THE 1896, 1927, AND 1959 TORNADOES.

IN ST. LOUIS COUNTY, THE TORNADO FIRST TOUCHED DOWN ABOUT 6:55 PM IN WEST ST. LOUIS COUNTY AT OLIVE STREET ROAD NEAR THE HOWARD BEND PUMPING STATION. THE TORNADO, MOVING NORTHEAST AROUND 40 MPH, THEN LEFT A PATH OF DESTRUCTION ACROSS HEAVILY POPULATED AREAS OF NORTH ST. LOUIS COUNTY, INCLUDING PARTS OF CHESTERFIELD, MARYLAND HEIGHTS, BRIDGETON, ST. ANN, EDMUNDSON, BERKELEY, FERGUSON AND SPANISH LAKE.

SOME SPECIFIC AREAS THE TORNADO MOVED THROUGH INCLUDED THE DORSETT-FEE FEE ROAD INTERSECTION, THE SOUTHEAST PART OF LAMBERT AIRPORT, ACROSS I-270 AT MISSOURI 67, AND THEN THROUGH SPANISH LAKE TO THE COLUMBIA BOTTOM ROAD AREA JUST SOUTH OF MADISON

FERRY ROAD. THE TORNADO APPARENTLY DISSIPATED AT THIS POINT AS THERE IS NO RECORD OF IT CONTINUING INTO ILLINOIS. THE DAMAGE PATH RANGED FROM 50 TO 200 YARDS WIDE AS THE TORNADO LASTED UNTIL ABOUT 730 PM.

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CENTRAL REGION DIRECTOR DENNIS MCCARTHY WAS A ST. LOUIS COUNTY RESIDENT AT THE TIME THE TORNADO HIT.

"I WAS IN THIS TORNADO MYSELF AND I REMEMBER IT EVERY YEAR", MCCARTHY RECALLED." WE WERE DIRECTLY IN THE PATH. MY FAMILY LIVED IN ST. ANN AT THE TIME AND I WAS GOING TO UMSL. PARTS OF ST. ANN WERE BADLY DAMAGED OR DESTROYED. WE LOST ALL OF OUR WINDOWS AND MOST OF OUR TREES. OUR ROOF WAS DAMAGED BUT INTACT AND BOTH OF OUR CARS WERE DAMAGED. WE WERE JUST FINISHING DINNER AND I WENT TO MY ROOM TO WATCH OUT THE WINDOW. I HEARD THE WIND INCREASING AND SAW STUFF BLOWING HORIZONTAL. I RECOMMENDED TO MY PARENTS AND BROTHER THAT WE ADJOURN TO THE BASEMENT (MY FIRST TORNADO WARNING!). WE DID NOT HAVE A TELEVISION OR RADIO ON AT THE TIME."

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ST. LOUIS WARNING COORDINATION METEOROLOGIST JIM KRAMPER WAS LIVING IN BERKELEY NEAR LAMBERT FIELD WHEN THE TORNADO HIT.

"I REMEMBER HEARING THUNDER AND THINKING THAT WAS STRANGE FOR JANUARY." KRAMPER SAID." MY FATHER WAS AN AUXILIARY POLICE OFFICER FOR BERKELEY AND HAD JUST GONE OUT ON PATROL. HE CALLED US AND SAID TO HEAD FOR THE BASEMENT BECAUSE THERE WAS A TORNADO HEADING OUR WAY. JUST THEN GOLFBALL SIZE HAIL STARTED FALLING AND BROKE SOME OF OUR WINDOWS. THAT WAS ALL I SAW OR HEARD UNTIL IT WAS OVER BECAUSE MY MOM MADE US STAY IN THE BASEMENT. THE TORNADO TRACKED WITHIN A QUARTER MILE OF MY HOUSE. I REMEMBER RIDING MY BIKE OVER TO THE NEXT SUBDIVISION AND LOOKING AT THE DAMAGE. THAT EVENT WAS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT GOT ME INTERESTED IN METEOROLOGY."

RECORDS INDICATE 3 PEOPLE WERE KILLED WITH 216 INJURED. DAMAGE INCLUDED 168 HOMES DESTROYED, 258 WITH MAJOR DAMAGE, AND 1485 WITH MINOR DAMAGE. AT LEAST 600 BUSINESSES WERE DESTROYED OR DAMAGED.

THE DAMAGE TOTAL WAS LISTED AT \$15 MILLION.

THE TORNADO WAS GIVEN A F4 RATING ON THE **FUJITA TORNADO RATING** SCALE. THE F4 OCCURRENCE WAS LIKELY VERY BRIEF AS THE BULK OF THE SEVERE DAMAGE WAS F2 TO LOWER F3.

EIGHT OTHER TORNADOES STRUCK MISSOURI THAT DAY. THEY OCCURRED IN BUCHANAN, CLINTON, JACKSON, RAY, CALDWELL, LIVINGSTON, SULLIVAN ..PUTNAM, SCHUYLER AND SCOTLAND COUNTIES.

ALTOGETHER THIS REMARKABLE LATE WINTER TORNADO OUTBREAK PRODUCED 32 TORNADOES FROM OKLAHOMA NORTH TO WISCONSIN. IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE WISCONSIN TORNADO WAS THE FARTHEST NORTH A TORNADO HAS OCCURRED DURING A WINTER OUTBREAK IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE BAD WEATHER CONTINUED ACROSS MISSOURI INTO JANUARY 25 AND 26. FREEZING RAIN STRUCK CENTRAL MISSOURI FROM LATE NIGHT ON THE 25TH INTO THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF THE 26TH CAUSING WIDESPREAD DAMAGE TO TREES, POWER AND TELEPHONE LINES. ANOTHER TORNADO STRUCK SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT THE MORNING OF THE 26TH IN NEWTON AND JASPER COUNTIES OF SOUTHWEST MISSOURI.

back to the Tornado Climatology Page. or

[Vortex St. Louis](#)

January 24, 1967
Tuesday evening
6:55 p.m.

Weather forecast:

**"Watching a particularly low, dark
cloud in Chesterfield area."**

*"I saw a low, black cloud and
it was swinging like crazy."*

Unusually warm, moist air from the Gulf of Mexico collided
with dry, cold air advancing from the Pacific Coast.

Tornado!

Heavy rain accompanied the storm. The lightening was
horizontal. Forecasters said the tornado traveled at 60 miles
per hour. As soon as the tornado passed it started to hail.

Two children killed, 217 people injured.

Jeri Cannady, 6 years, Old Farm Estates,
Diane Schlegel, 4 years, Maryland Heights.

"You could feel the pressure, it hurt our ears."

Globe: January 25, 1967

Two children were killed, 175 persons injured and
150 homes destroyed or heavily damaged Tuesday
evening by a tornado which shattered the summer-like
calm of St. Louis' five-day January heat wave with
five minutes of roaring death and destruction.





11 Ridgecrest Drive

Thelma Chapman was in the bedroom. When the rumbling got to be too long and the wind too strong, she flopped on the bed and put a pillow over her head! Investigating later she discovered the garage gone and one of the cars lifted up and onto the exposed foundation.

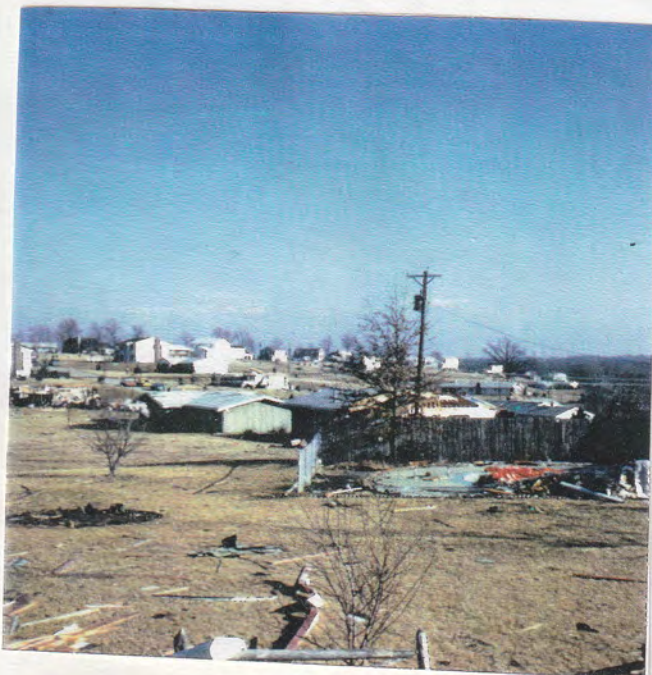


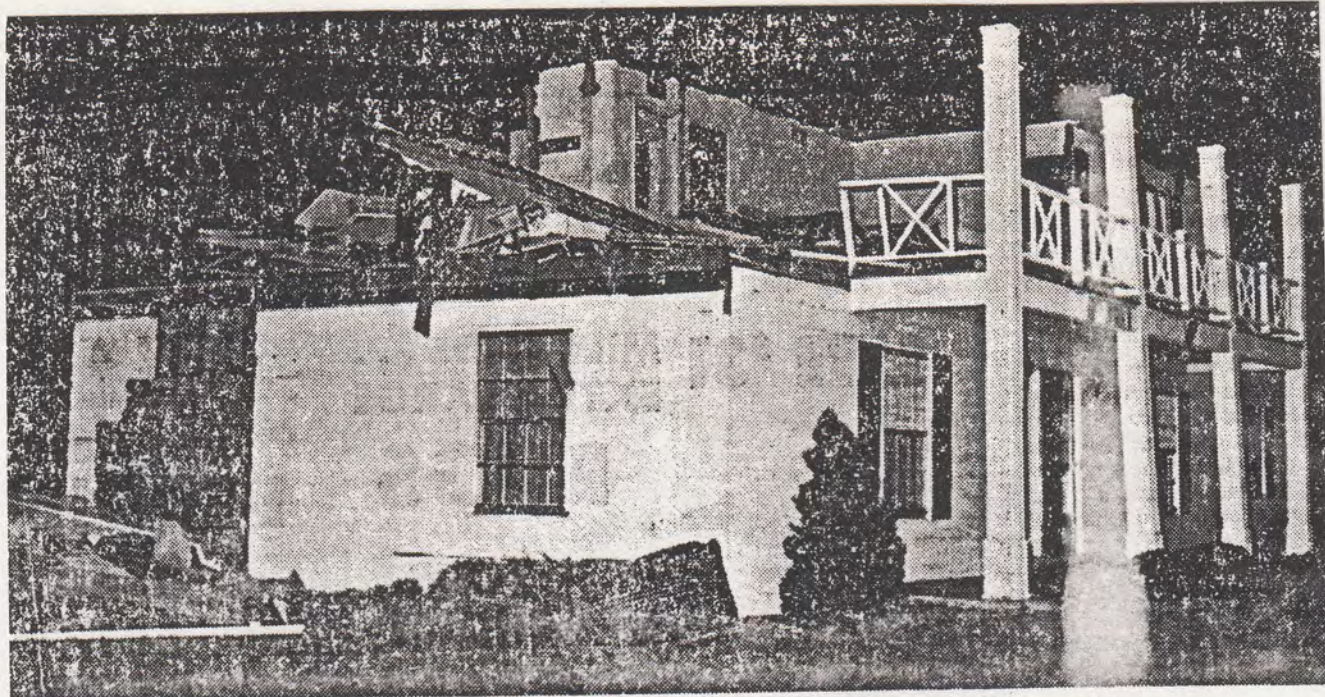


12 Ridgecrest

The south facing wall of the garage disappeared! The gas meter was ruptured making for a potentially dangerous situation. Across the street can be seen the front of 124 Ridgecrest minus the white support columns. The north side of that house was blown into the garage of 123.

Below is a view of the backyard of 12 showing the debris and the back of #14 which only had the windows shattered. Just beyond is the flattened residence at #15.





Destruction in River Bend Estates

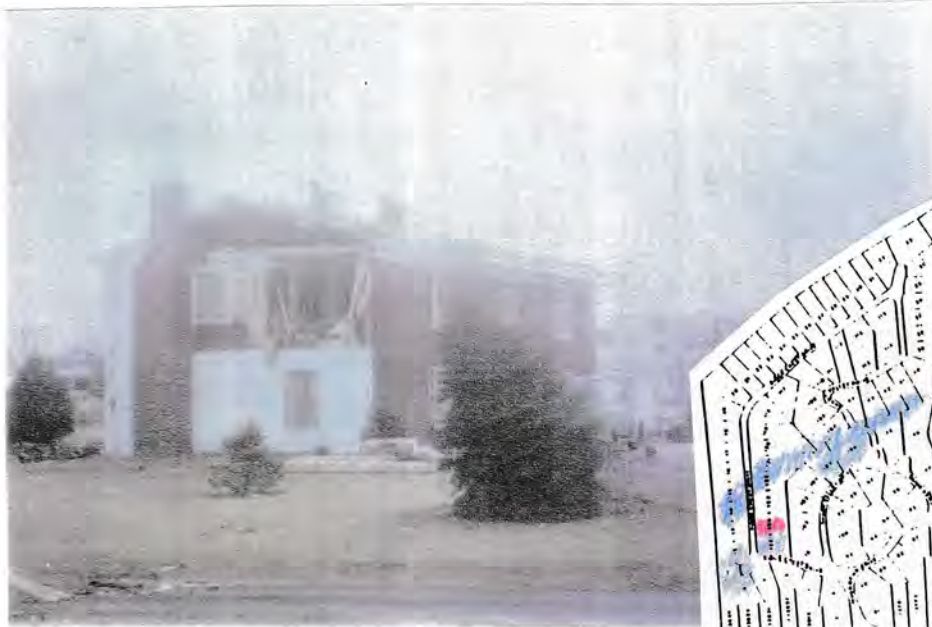
The roof and upper floor were blown away from the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard N. Thurston, 125 Ridgcrest drive, in River Bend Estates. Thurston

directed his family to the basement shortly before the storm struck and no one was injured.

125 RIDGECREST DRIVE

Dick Thurston was sleeping before the storm. He awakened and went down stairs. Afterwards he discovered a large timber laying across that same bed! Upstairs walls were blown out, furniture standing for all to see. Thurston and sons, Robert, 17, and John, 14, ran to the basement. Thurston was the last one down, felt himself being lifted, he went up, his pants went down, and he managed to grab onto the banisters to prevent from being lifted aloft. That's right, Dick Thurston has the distinction of losing his pants in the tornado of '67. Robert, *"There was a lot of pressure on our ears. It sounded like a freight train."*





124 RIDGECREST DRIVE

Mrs. Louis Clark showed her house, which suffered the loss of one wall in her daughter's room on the north side. The same wind that sucked the north bedroom wall out, drove a two-by-four through the downstairs television room. *"My son, 20, had just turned on the television set and he shouted to me to get into the powder room, the only inner room we have in our house. We have no basement. The whole family crowded in there and my son quickly opened the windows on the east side. We think that's what kept our house from being blown off like our neighbor's. But there was so little time to do anything.*

"We are so grateful that my sister and her two children, who are our houseguests, were out to dinner. Look where that wall was in my daughter's room. That's where the children would have been playing."

The neighbors at 125 had a black Model T. It was in their backyard. It had rolled so much that it was nothing more than a ball of metal! Lou Clark's barbecue was two lots away, the north wall was blown into 123's garage! Lou was with a daughter on Olive at 1270 at 7:00 p.m. As he proceeded down Olive he was puzzled by all the traffic. His daughter was switching the radio stations so he didn't hear any news broadcasts and didn't know until he was stopped at the entrance to the subdivision by the police that there had been a tornado. *"What happened on Ridgecrest?" "It got blown away."* Amazing no one was seriously hurt. Ridgecrest had been *'blown away!'*

13 RIDGECREST DRIVE

All but the bedrooms had to be rebuilt. Was a home rented to owners waiting for their homes to be completed.

14 RIDGECREST DRIVE

West windows broken, debris embedded in west wall. Bucket blown through a window, landed in their shower. The shower door was not broken!

15 RIDGECREST DRIVE

The Model T Ford in the garage was blown across the street, doors stripped by the wind from the chassis, body smashed. *"There was only one other like it in the St. Louis area."* The sailboat in the garage? *"Someone told me they saw the sailboat a block away."* L.E. Noel watched as the St. Louis County of Public Works posted a red and white condemned sign on the only wall of his house that remained standing.

Doris had been at home with their 17 year old son. *"The house just disappeared from around us! We were going to go over to #14 but the power lines were down and blocking our way, so we knocked on the door at #16, they couldn't believe what happened. Our 19 year old son returned as soon as he heard. He had the top down on his convertible, it had been that warm. He shortly had four flat tires."*



122 RIDGECREST DRIVE

People at number 18 said, "My the freight train is loud tonight." They walked outside, looked around in amazement. The Dorsey house was gone! They ran down, looked around and heard voices coming from the basement. The air conditioning condenser was lodged in front of the walk out basement door. They were able to move it and got the three out. The Dorsey's moved out that night and never returned!



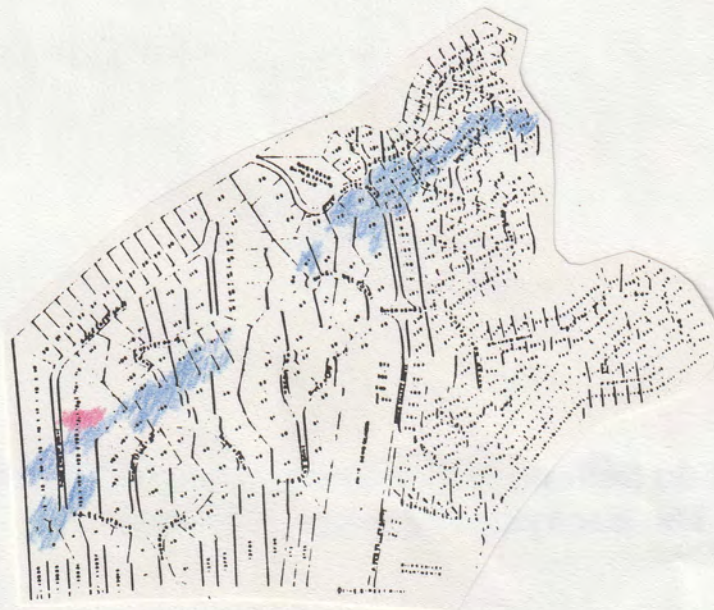
Standing on the driveway looking southeast.



**Yes, I do believe that is a bathtub off to the right!
The backyard looking northeast.**

121 RIDGECREST DRIVE

The John Naylor family had never slept in their home. They had moved only the day before from Memphis, Tenn. Mrs. Naylor, who had just gotten the house cleaned on the evening of the storm, stood patiently watching her husband hang clothes out on a line to air. *"The rest are down there in the woods with the neighborhood's."*



Directly behind the Model T, that was blown from #15's garage, is #121. To the right is what is left of #122!



123 Ridge Crest Drive

The Reynolds were hosting a dinner for their extended family. Mrs. Reynolds had just removed the pot roast from the oven. It was sitting on the counter. Mr. Reynolds decided he had better open a few windows as the conditions were ripe for a tornado. He had no sooner opened the kitchen window when the tornado struck. Because he had opened a window only the trap leading to the attic space was blown out, inside the closed entryway closet! As mentioned before, the contents of the wall at #124 was in the garage. Mrs. Reynolds said, "You do silly things when you are in shock. I picked up the pot roast from the kitchen floor and was insisting that someone take it home with them so it wouldn't be wasted. It was covered with glass particles!"

The front of the home was tilted in and had to be repaired. That is when they decided to add the bricks. All in all, they consider themselves lucky as no one was injured by the flying glass.



106 Shady Valley



The mystery house. Could this be another view of 106? Or possibly 105?



107 SHADY VALLEY

The Nelson Traverse family had been moving into their new \$32,000 home for several weeks. The family had planned to work in the house the night of the 24th, but Nelson was delayed by a business engagement. *"Thank God we weren't in there. I think we'd all be dead if I hadn't been delayed."* They were across the street at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Spillane, 44 Shady Valley, when the tornado struck.

The previous owners said that had they still been there they know their daughter would have been spared. The only wall standing was the bathroom wall with the mirror still attached. That is where she would have been, standing in front of that mirror doing her hair!



44 SHADY VALLEY

Several windows broken and a heavy timber imbedded in the wall of the second floor - as though it were a spear thrown by a giant. Janet Spillane, 13, was asleep in a second floor room and wakened when a window blew in. Others in the house, including the Traverses, were on the first floor. They dived behind chairs and other furniture or crouched next to walls when they heard the wind roaring.

"The wooded ravine behind 44, 43, 42 and 41 looked bizarrely festive, with bright guttering, clothing, bedspreads and curtains hanging from the tree limbs. Individual lawns were spread with rugs and furniture drying in the sun."

43 SHADY VALLEY

A 2x6 imbedded in the Schmidt's wall, moved the washer to the middle of room.

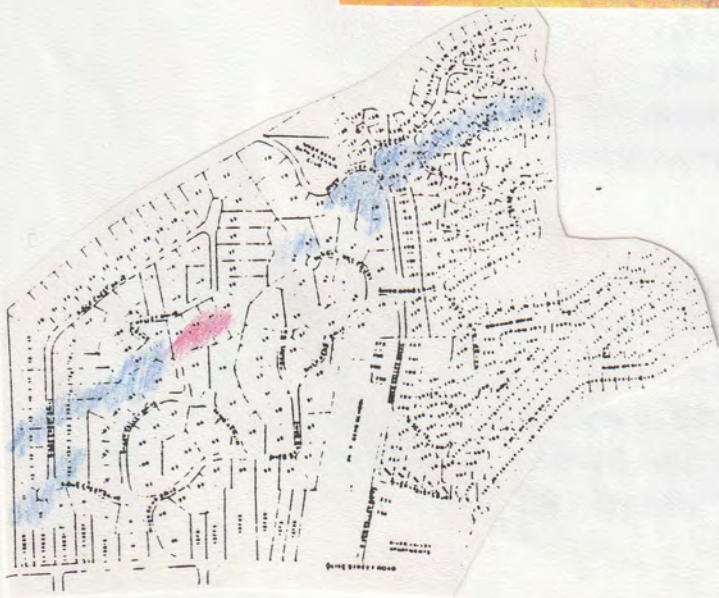


42 SHADY VALLEY

A large tree was uprooted and slammed onto their roof, pinning the husband who was watching T.V. A branch came down on either side of him, supporting the trunk. His daughters were so distraught that they ran next door to the Schmidts' for help, banging on the windows of the door so hard that they shattered the glass and cut their hands. By the time Herb got there the Dad was crawling out from under the tree.

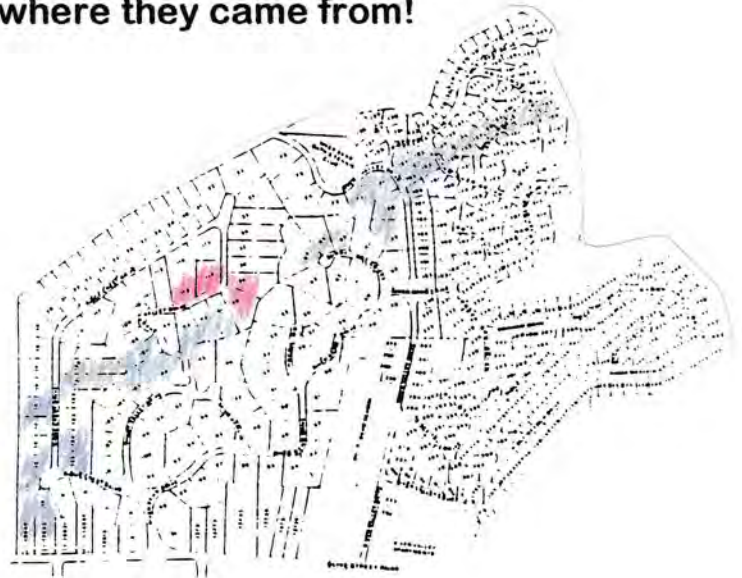


41 SHADY VALLEY



39/40 SHADY VALLEY

Suspecting a tornado, Ray Boston opened the sliding glass door but thought, "*This is silly, I'll get water in the house.*" The rain was really coming down. He reached to close the screen door and the deck appeared as if it were ocean waves rolling to a shore. A 2x6 rammed the front part of the house, crashing through the large window and splitting when it hit the railing that can be seen. A curtain rod penetrated the base of a tree in the front yard. Both the wood and the rod were at right angles to the path of the tornado that went down the ravine behind his home. The carport's 6x6 support was tossed over the roof into the backyard, the wood supports above a brick wall all blown away, the carport roof rested on the top of the bricks. The only other damage was the right back corner of the roof. The roof over the bedroom wing was lifted enough that leaves were trapped when the roof resettled. The trees in the front had huge balls of Christmas tree lights, tightly wound balls; three of them - not his, he doesn't know where they came from!



113 Shady Valley

Jim Forsyth's wife, Ruth Ann, was visiting. She and Pat Milholland were in the den. A 2x4 came through the kitchen window, passed between them and exited through that den window!

114 Shady Valley

Jim Forsyth was in Memphis on business. After Ruth Ann was able to pick her way home through the scattered debris, she learned that the children had sensed that a tornado was coming and threw open several windows, which undoubtedly saved the house. They had one column in front placed at a 45 degree angle and another twisted 180 degrees.

Tornadic Fury Over St. Louis County

Luxury homes in River Bend Estates lying in ruins yesterday in the wake of the smashing fury of the tornado that brought disaster to many parts of St.

Louis county: The tornado first touched down on Olive boulevard west of Woods Mill road and ended its path of destruction in the Spanish Lake area.

65 SUNNY HILL COURT

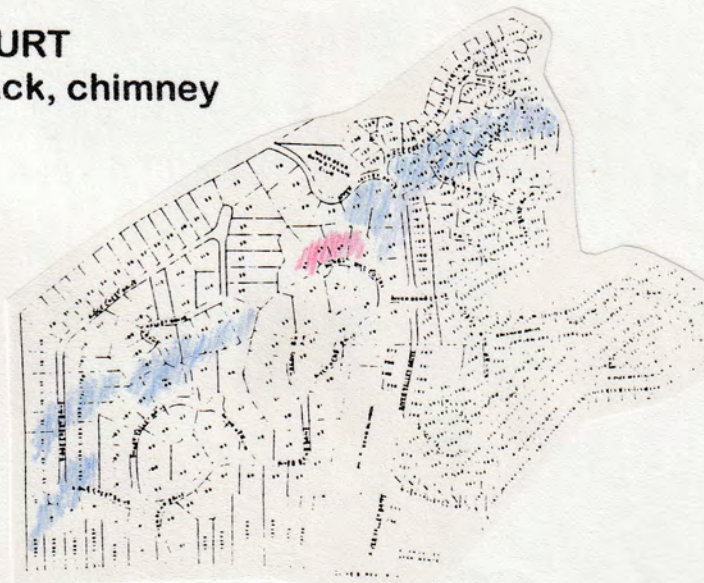
Major damage can be seen from the aerial photo.

66 SUNNY HILL COURT

A rug was pulled up the chimney!

67 SUNNY HILL COURT

Roof peeled back, chimney fell in.

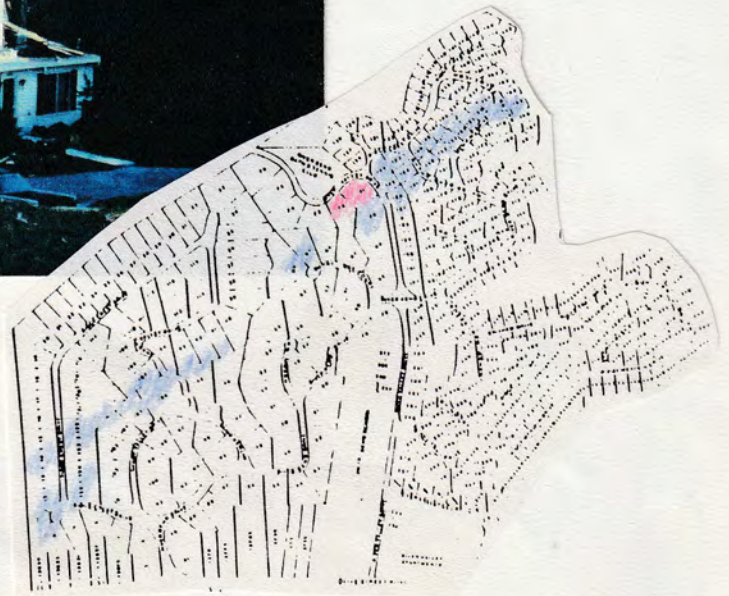


73 RIVER VALLEY DRIVE

Zelda Esgro: *"You know something is different, you just know. We tried to get to the basement but the force of the wind had blown open the double doors in the walkout basement. The wind coming up the basement stairs was so strong we couldn't get down so we just laid on the hallway floor."* Later they discovered that the entire basement was covered with at least 3 feet of leaves and leaves had been blown through the house to the second floor!

72 RIVER VALLEY DRIVE

Their teenage son went to take a shower. He came out of the shower and his bedroom was gone! Their car somehow went up the hill, over or around #71 and ended up in the front of what was left of the Snyder home, #184! Their name was burned into a redwood picnic bench and that bench was found in Overland!



71 RIVER VALLEY DRIVE

Mrs. James B. Hapeman Jr. picked her way very, very carefully through the pile of lumber, broken furniture, bricks and Campbell Soup cans past a torn, grimy copy of "Winnie the Pooh." She bent down, *"Oh good, another spoon. Apparently most of the kitchen landed here."*

Her home was scattered over four lots. The steel beam that supported the home over the basement had been twisted. The largest single piece of the house was a segment of one wall. It was across the street on a neighbor's lawn, near the shell of her dishwasher with one clean, unbroken glass lying inside.

"That's nothing. Take a look at my refrigerator, lying there, there and there. Do you know my refrigerator was smashed but my eggs were still good?" She was alone in the house with her three children, ages 10, 7 and 5.

"We have a lot of wind storms out here and frankly, I don't usually pay too much attention to them. I don't know what made me take the children to the basement, because it's the first time I ever did it. When the lights went out, I lighted a kerosene lantern and told the kids to run for the stairs. I was last and as I started down the stairs, there was this huge noise and I felt the lantern being pulled out of my hand. Somehow we got to the southwest corner of the basement, I always remembered that, and I got the kids there and the dog - oh, yes, we saved our dog - and then the whole house just . . . exploded."



"The next thing I remember was seeing stars in the sky and knowing the house was gone and thinking I had to get the kids out. I was trying to climb out over the wall, and my daughter said to me, 'Mother, why don't you use the door?' We have a walkout basement."

"I saw the power lines were down and decided it would be stupid, after surviving the storm, to get us all killed by stepping on a live wire so we waited. After a few minutes, my neighbor, Martha Gallagher, brought her car down and used her headlights to light our way out. And I guess that's it. My husband was at work, so at least the family car was saved. Everything else is gone. Everything that counts."

"All the antiques we refinished, the old spindle bed from my folks, my husband's grandfather clock. Someone found one of my boy's baby books down in the woods there and brought it to me."

As Mrs. Hapeman stood on the scattered remnants of her house, she spotted the subdivision's repair truck and called out, *"Hey, when are you going to fix that shower I've been telling you about? Shall I keep the pieces?"*



184 RIDGE CREST

Dick Snyder: *"We were leaving for a PTA meeting, refreshment committee, the coffee pot was ready. The lights went out. I went down the hall to turn off a T.V. so that when the power came back on it wouldn't be damaged. I noticed the patio door drapes hit the opposite wall 15 feet away - I felt as if I was floating in the hallway. Later I realized it was probably the house that was moving. I had to climb out of the basement stairwell even though I had never gone down! I found Betty pulling bricks off herself. She kept saying, 'Where are the children, where are the children?' They had been in the same room!"* Eight year old Brett had gone sailing through the air - he says he closed his eyes - and ended up in the neighbor's yard, 75-80 feet! He came walking back, only had a few scratches. Six year old Ann was trapped in a wrought iron couch that they used in their family room. The back had collapsed, providing protection - she was blown out onto the patio. The refrigerator was on the property line - 35-40 feet, the kitchen sink gone. Yes, the Snyders lost their kitchen sink. Water poured from the pipes and was filling the basement.

They managed to get across the street - he was the only one with shoes, the others had lost theirs in the tornado - without too many cuts. Neighbors took Betty and Brett to the hospital. She had 4 x 8 bruises all over, internal injuries and stayed 10 days. Brett was kept for observation over night.



Ann Snyder and friend



10:00 that night Dick decided he would need transportation so the neighbor helped to dig where the garage had been. The garage door springs were wrapped around the cars. He got most of the broken glass out of the station wagon and got in to drive it across the street and found his dog wrapped around the gas pedal! He had gotten in through the broken windows and found the safest place possible. The convertible had been lifted and was resting on a large metal roller used to flatten the ground. When Dick jacked up the car to remove the roller it wouldn't roll. A 2x4 had penetrated the metal and acted as a brake! He bought the station wagon back from the insurance company for \$100 and the '55 Chevy convertible with 50,000 miles on it for \$50. Drove the station wagon to work for several years - didn't look that great but ran fine. Sold the convertible and was sorry because that year became a classic.

A fishing tackle box that was in the family room went through the side of a house at 171 Henning!

Dick says, "*I wonders if they ever held that PTA meeting.*"



The car is from #72!

Globe, April 6, 1967

All of a sudden the lights went out. Betty got up to light a candle. Then, she recalls, she had a premonition that something awful was going to happen. She reached to put out the candle and saw the whole wall coming in toward her. They hadn't heard a sound and didn't know there were tornado warnings out for the St. Louis area. (There weren't any until the first twister hit.)

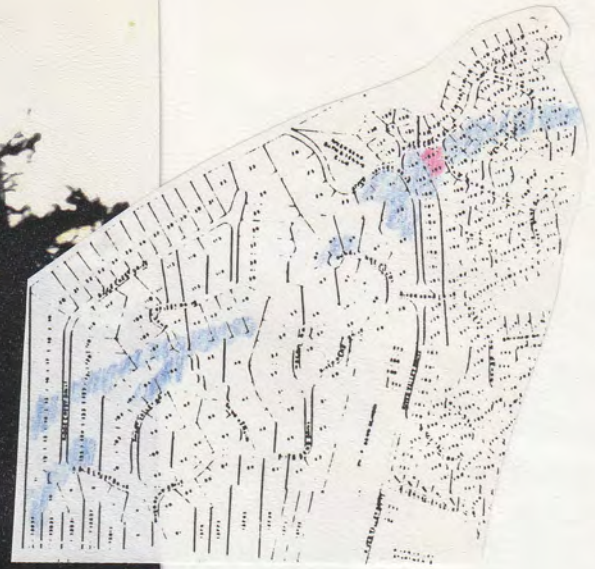
The next thing Betty knew, her husband was pulling her out of the rubble, and *'we were out in the open air right in our own family room.'*

SECTION B

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 1967



A bent iron lamppost is all that stands as a reminder of the Jan. 24 tornado that leveled the Richard Snyder home in River Bend Estates in Chesterfield. The neighbors were so kind during the 10 days Mrs. Snyder was hospitalized following the tornado that the Snyders told the contractor they wouldn't consider moving away. Their new house will be ready next week.



183 RIDGE CREST taken from 182.



Chair and lamp visible.



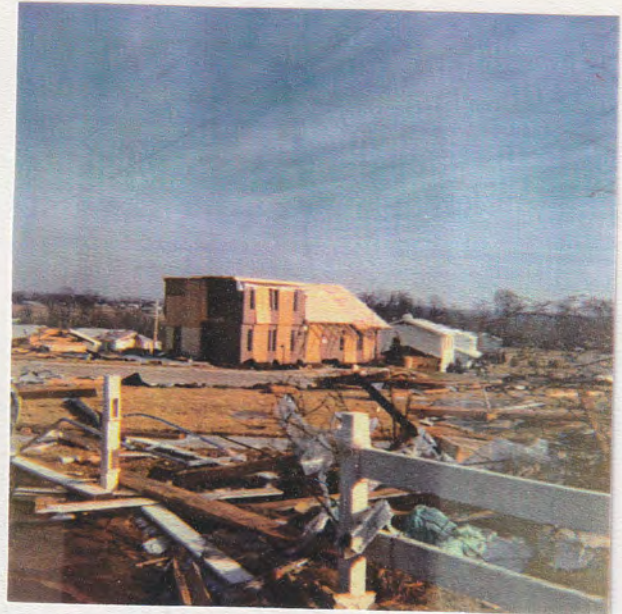
Love the chimney!

182 RIDGE CREST

Dunlop: The aerial photo shows two paths. Dunlop's home got hit on the southeast side by the smaller funnel damaging a corner and on the northwest side by the major funnel. The northwest damage was extensive, the garage was gone and the family room furniture can be seen from the front as the wall is gone. Their chimney is neatly laying on their roof! Ethel said, *"I saw what looked like fireworks. Later I realized I was probably seeing a transformer explode."*



149 RIVER BEND DRIVE



150 RIVER BEND DRIVE

148 RIDGECREST DRIVE

Mary Burrows: *We were just sitting down to dinner when a deafening roar sounding like a fright train told us to head for the basement. We were literally pushed down those stairs! The garage door had blown open as well as the interior door leading to the house. Limbs broke the windows and glass was imbedded in the walls. If we hadn't gotten to the basement someone would have been seriously hurt.*

The Burrows were the first house left standing in the destructive path the tornado took in this area.



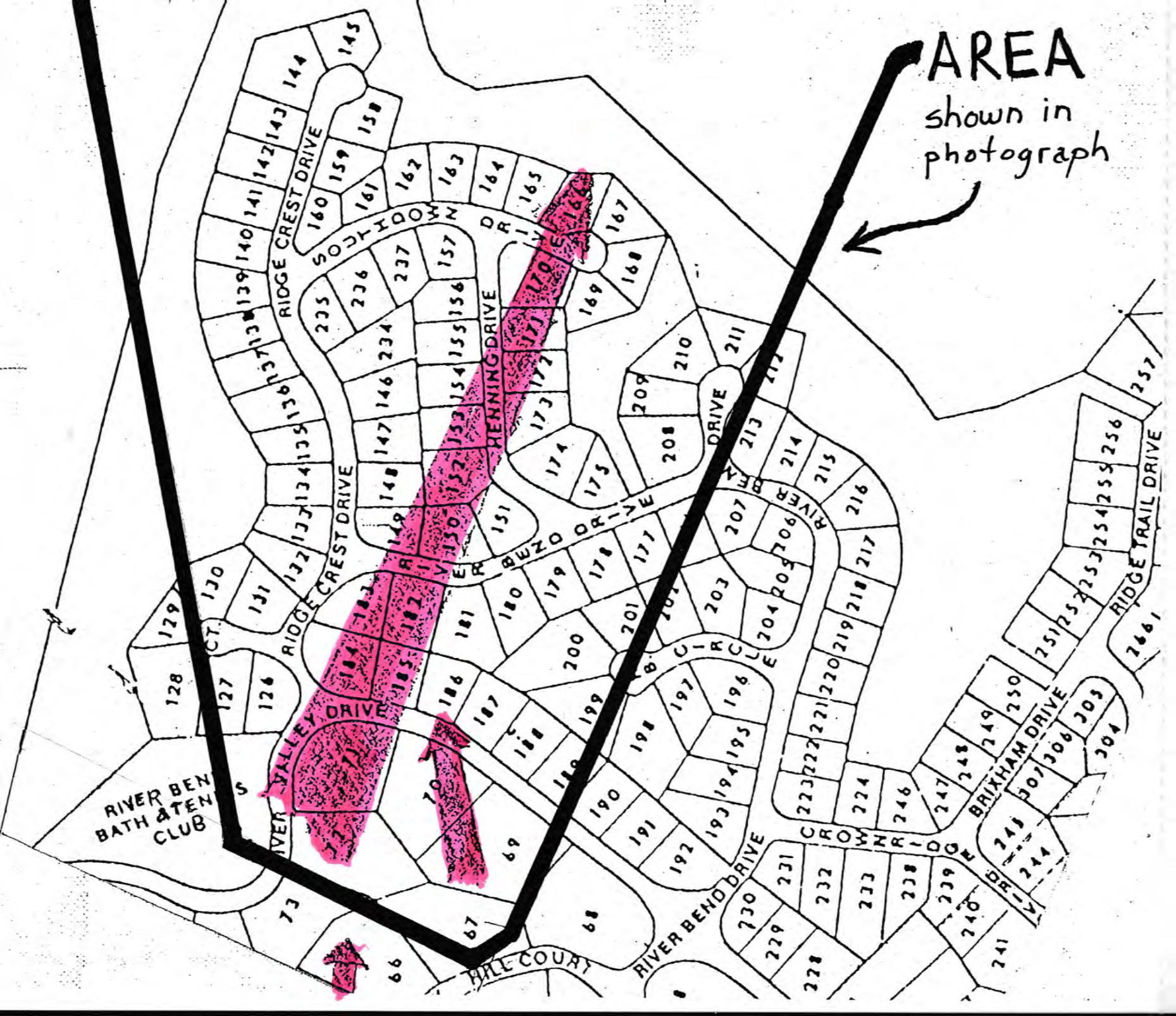
Rear View of 152, 153, 154 Henning





Note the major damage on the left and the 'minor' damage on the right, forming an upside down V, two funnels.

AREA
shown in
photograph



RIVER BEN
BATH & TENNIS
CLUB

VALLEY DRIVE

HERRING DRIVE

HILL COURT

RIVER BEND DRIVE

CROWN RIDGE DRIVE

BRIXHAM DRIVE

RIDGE TRAIL DRIVE

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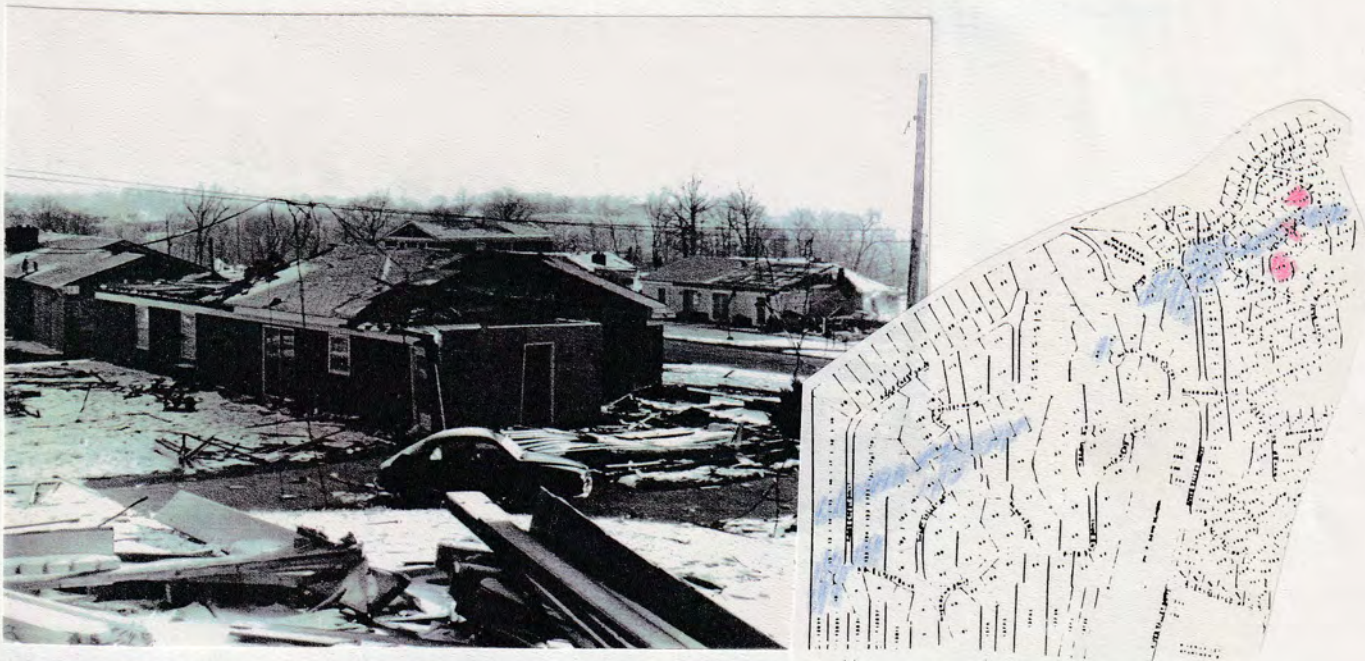
257

175 RIVER BEND DRIVE

Harold & Jane Cooke. They had the only working telephone so the neighbors were coming and going, placing calls to loved ones to tell them that no matter what they heard on the news that they were all O.K.

173 HENNING

Barb & Harvey Philips. Even though their home was badly damaged, they are the ones that ended up with all the neighbors in their basement that evening. They were that kind of people, always helping, always there for everyone.



Rear of 152 Henning showing 173 across the street

171 HENNING

There was a hole on the southwest side. That is where Dick Snyder's tackle box descended. For months they were picking fish hooks out of their carpet!

157 HENNING

They had a hole in the side of their home, decided to put a window there!



153 Henning



154 Henning

Gladie Wathen: We had finished dinner and the children had gone in to watch a favorite television show. The weather forecaster had just given the 'all clear' for the tornado watch in our area. The electricity went off so I was headed down the hallway to get a flashlight. The force of the wind blew out the sliding glass doors in the master bedroom and blew the master bedroom door backwards off its hinges and down the hallway. Luckily it only hit the back of my left hand, but I have those scars to this day. Our oldest daughter at home had the presence of mind to lay on top of the youngest child to protect him from flying objects. My husband, Jack, was at the corner gas station paying for his gas when he looked out and saw his car act as if it were possessed! He couldn't believe the destruction when he attempted to drive down the street. He felt, for sure, that we were all dead.

We managed to get across the street and to the Philip's basement without getting electrocuted. We were covered with insulation and wanted to get into a shower. Couldn't do that until we got a motel room that night.

Inspection the next day revealed that the house had been lifted and shifted. As it did so shoes, never a pair, were trapped. The house was condemned and we purchased 368 Ridge Meadow when it was completed.



172 HENNING

Rob & Gerda Burt. Rob saw a black cloud along the horizon while traveling I-70 earlier in the evening. He was at a Reserve meeting when he heard of the touchdown and was excused early. Being in uniform helped to enter the subdivision as the police already had road blocks up to prevent looting.

When the lights went out the son who had been studying in his bedroom came out. Gerda lit the candles on the dining room table. There was a roar, strange air movement, that is when she hollered, "*Go to the basement!*" As she was descending she was thrown against the wall of the basement steps. Somehow their Beagle made it to the basement without being told! When it was safe to surface Gerda said, "*Where did all this snow come from?*" It was insulation, and it was everywhere. The roof was off the kitchen and part of the dining room. She opened the door to the garage, "*There is no garage.*" The boys said, "*There is no utility room. Where are all the guppies?*" There had been over 200 guppies in that utility room! The canary was still safe in its cage in what was left of the kitchen. Gerda is Catholic and noted later that the rooms that had a Holy Picture in them were not damaged. The bedroom where the son had been studying had a beam laying on the bed and desk. It had smashed through the sliding glass doors. Neighbors came over and turned off the gas and hollered, "*Anyone here?*" All the neighbors were so very nice.

When Rob returned he wanted to find the car keys. "*Fat chance,*" he says to himself. After all the entire garage and utility room are gone. The keys? They dropped straight down, all he had to do was bend over and pick them up!



By Buel White, a Post-Dispatch Photographer

A Looter Caught in the Act

A piece of debris from a tornado-wrecked home in River Bend Estates being dragged away yesterday by a beagle that was inspecting the ruins. The home was the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur S. Ponds, 165 Southdown drive.

165 SOUTHDOWN

Art & Liz Pond had lived in Springfield, Mass, where a fire destroyed that home. They moved to Texas City where a hurricane destroyed that home. At 165 Southdown the tornado destroyed that home. They then bought a home at 118 Ridgecrest and asked their insurance agent what kind of additional insurance they might need. Yep, they bought earthquake insurance!

Art Pond was out of town. Libby (12) landed on her feet, George (14) was in the backyard with a wall on top of him. He managed to stick up his arm so that he could be found. James (5) was found under a door, unconscious, they thought he might be dead but when the neighbor, Loren Forrester, picked him up he noticed he was still warm. Liz said, "*May I borrow the flashlight? I'd like to try and find the baby.*" Willa, the housekeeper, had taken baby Tom to his room then brought him back down saying it was too early for him to go to sleep. He was in a bassinet on the first floor when the tornado struck. They found the baby safe inside the bassinet. It had turned on its side with the strong bottom of the basket protecting him

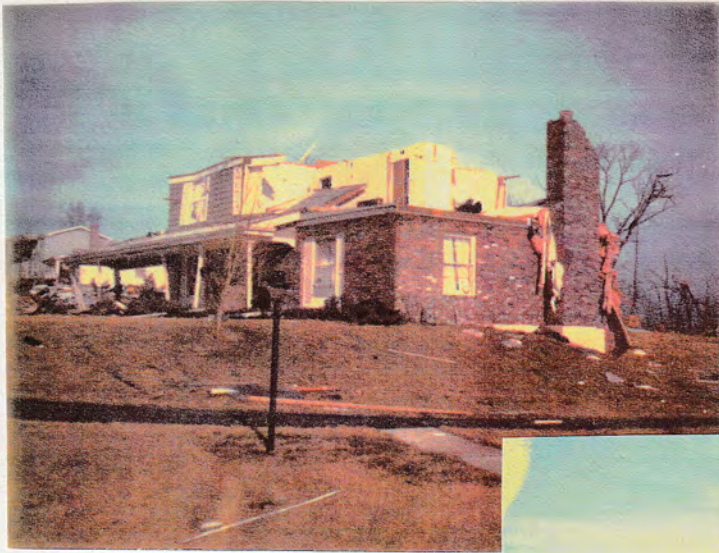
from debris. Bill Reese found Tom and came around the house with him under his coat. They got everyone in Loren's car. A boat on a trailer across the street had blown up against the car and was vertical. Loren was able to pull it off to the side then drove over what he couldn't get out. They took the Water Works Road to St. Johns. Just before they got there James starting crying, it was the greatest noise any of them had ever heard! They were one of the first ones to get to the hospital, five minutes later it was swamped. It took Loren 45 minutes to get anyone to look at the baby. They only found a scratch on his stomach, but he had two nurses! A convention of 200 nurses were there and came to everyone's aid. Little James had a broken arm. So lucky, they were all so very lucky.

Liz wanted to do something for Loren, to thank him for his help that night. She told him about Willa, her housekeeper. Loren was a bachelor raising three children and Willa came once a week for 25 years and did what had to be done. Never had to be told what to do, she did what needed to be done. It was a 'thank you' each and every week for 25 years.



165 Southdown in the foreground,
156 & 157 Henning & 237
Southdown across the street.





166 SOUTHDOWN

Loren Forrester: *"When the lights went out I sent my son upstairs to get a flashlight."* Fourteen year old John was crawling onto the shelf in his closet to retrieve the flashlight in the back when the roof lifted and he saw the tornado approaching! It was like lightening, but short bursts hopping erratically and headed his way! He scrambled down, descending the stairs three at a time. His father was standing in the open front door, his arms outstretched bracing himself. John noticed the cabinet next to the stairs about two feet off the ground and turning circles. That is when he said to himself, *"I think we have a series problem here."* He grabbed his father and they flew down the basement steps. The dog had been on a bed upstairs sleeping. He returned three days later hobbling on a broken leg. Loren said it sounded like a jet at tree top level, and your ears felt the pressure. Libby came over to get their help. They waded over debris to help their neighbors next door.



165 & 166 Southdown - exit point for the tornado in River Bend.



166 Southdown

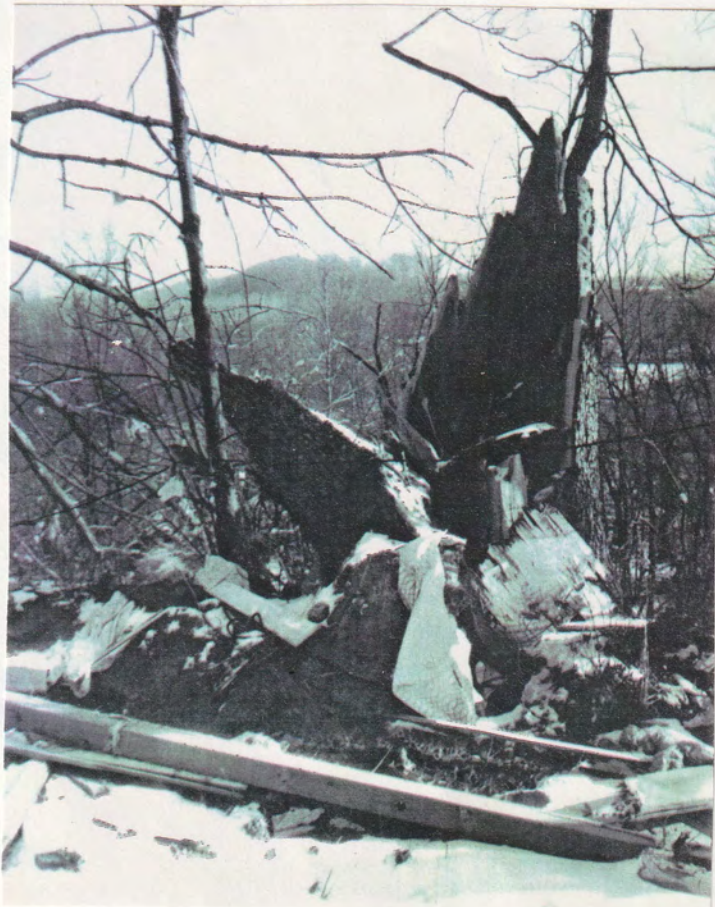
Shows the boat that was blown across the street, and the missing upstairs! (Photo is reversed)



168 Southdown - It used to have a roof!

169 SOUTHDOWN

Roof came up, drapes blew out and were trapped when roof came back down!



Tree at the exit point for River Bend Estates.

Thursday, January 26, 1967

**RAIN AND COLD
CAUSING MORE
DAMAGE HERE**

Snow Expected —
Homeowners Urge
to Protect Property

Heavy rain caused further damage to property today as it poured into homes whose roofs and walls were blown off in the tornado Tuesday night in west and north St. Louis county.

Not much relief from the weather was in prospect for property owners who had hoped to prevent further damage to their homes. Light snow is expected tonight.

Many property owners engaged moving companies to remove from their homes furniture and other personal property. As a result, the winding streets of River Bend Estates and Old Farm Estates were filled with large moving vans, some of whose drivers had difficulty finding the houses to which they had been sent. In some cases, the houses were leveled and the address markers blown away. Movers had to pick through wreckage to find the furniture.

A prospective resident was shown the available homes in the subdivision by a Real Estate agent. Being from out of town she knew nothing of the tornado. *“What kind of construction is this? Why do they use so many tarps?”*

10 Communities Are Hard Hit

Globe-Democrat Staff Writers

Two children were killed, 175 persons injured and 150 homes destroyed or heavily damaged Tuesday evening by a tornado which shattered the summer-like calm of St. Louis' five-day January heat wave with five minutes of roaring death and destruction.

The dead are:

DIANE SCHLEGEL, 4, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Schlegel, 12413 Glengate dr., Glenwood.

JERI CANNADY, 6, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Cannady, 2331 Green Bough dr., Creve Coeur.

Many expensive homes in west county residential areas were among those destroyed or very heavily damaged, police reported.

The twister, descending from storm-darkened skies just west of Chesterfield at 7:04 p.m. and cut a block-wide swath northeasterly, bringing injury and damage to 10 St. Louis County communities from Olive boulevard near the Missouri River to Spanish Lake near the Mississippi.

Damage was reported in or near Lake, River Bend Estates, Old Farm Estates, Creve Coeur, Maryland Heights, St. Ann, Edmundson, Ferguson and Spanish Lake.

At Lambert-St. Louis Municipal airport, 60 planes were diverted to other cities when first regular, then auxiliary power failed, plunged the entire complex except for a single runway into total blackness.

Control tower personnel were unable to guide the pilots of incoming planes because there was no radar.

Electrical service was restored to Lambert-St. Louis Municipal Airport at 9:35 p.m. Some 500 persons spent 2½ hours in the passenger terminal, amid shattered glass and other debris, with only portable lighting.

At the nearby McDonnell plant, 1000 glass windows were broken.

Hardest hit were residential areas along Olive boulevard west of State Highway 141, where some seventy \$25,000-and-up homes were flattened; Maryland Heights and St. Ann, where a north county library branch was unroofed.



