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COLLABORATION | COORDINATION

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WV VOAD meeting dates for 2018

WV VOAD and its member agencies will meet quarterly throughout 2018. All meetings will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Thomas Catholic Church, 624 Kanawha St., in Gassaway.

- ◆ March 6
- ◆ June 5
- ◆ Sept. 11
- ◆ Dec. 4

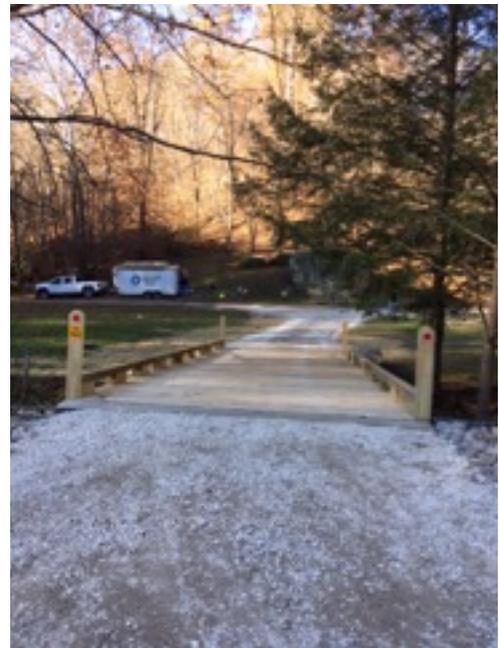
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WV VOAD Bridge Project honors board member

Green Creek, W.Va. — WV VOAD and its member agencies celebrated completion of their 45th bridge project by honoring a longtime VOAD board member.

The Joann Fleming Bridge in Roane County will provide safe access for two families to reach their homes. Residents had no direct route to cross Green Creek since the June 2016 floods swept through their neighborhood and destroyed parts of the existing structure.

With financial contributions from the West Virginia VOAD Bridge Project, the Disaster Relief Fund and the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia, a VOAD member agency, construction began on the new bridge in November and took about a week. Labor was provided by volunteers with Mennonite Disaster Service, which also is a member agency of WV VOAD.



Above: The new bridge in Roane County serves two families.

Left: Joann Fleming.



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“We couldn’t have done this without the teams and hard work from Mennonite Disaster Service, the coordination from VOAD staff and those from the Episcopal Diocese and the West Virginia Bridge Project who put the funds toward this,” said Jenny Gannaway, WV VOAD’s executive director.

The bridge was named in honor of Roane County native Fleming, a state Department of Health and Human Resources employee and VOAD board member who was an early supporter of the bridge project. She passed away in May 2017 after a battle with cancer.

“This bridge was perfect for what Joann stood for,” Gannaway said. “She always wanted to look out for the elderly, people with disabilities, families with children — and this bridge takes care of all of those.”

Fleming served as disaster coordinator for the DHHR’s Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities and was the link between that agency and VOAD.

“She was somebody who was always on the forefront of every disaster helping us get things coordinated and getting supplies and making sure behavioral health was being taken care of,” Gannaway said. “She is greatly missed. You really don’t realize how much a person does until they aren’t there doing it.”

The West Virginia VOAD Bridge Project, honored as National VOAD’s 2016 Innovative Program of the Year, is an effort by WV VOAD, and supported by government agencies, businesses, community groups and volunteers, to rebuild private bridges that were destroyed or damaged during flooding. The program has now completed 46 new bridges in nine counties.

To donate to the Bridge Project or to volunteer, contact Benjamin Cisco at benjamincisco@wvvoad.org.



A work team from Mennonite Disaster Service spent a week building the new Joann Fleming Bridge. Construction was made possible with support from the WV VOAD Bridge Project, the Disaster Relief Fund and the Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia, among other agencies.



Letter from the Director

As so many communities in our state continue to heal from the devastating floods of 2016 and 2017, we at WV VOAD would like to thank our amazing member agencies that have made so much of the recovery and progress possible.

From the teams of volunteers who have stepped in to repair homes or rebuild them from the ground up to the agencies that have donated money to fill in the gaps and help families get back on their feet, the tireless work of our members has not slowed down even now. We also are so thankful for the ongoing support of so many of the state's philanthropic foundations that

provide WV VOAD with the continued capacity to coordinate recovery around the state.

The WV VOAD Bridge Project, which relies on the hands-on work and financial contributions of many members, also has had continued success rebuilding 46 private bridges destroyed or damaged during flooding. We look forward to a busy construction season coming up to provide even more families with safe passage and secure housing. Thank you for helping us!

Sincerely,

Jenny Gannaway
WV VOAD Executive Director

Preparedness tip: Stay braced for cold and ice

As winter rages on in the Mountain State, make sure your home (or workplace) is still ready for low temperatures, snow and ice. Mother Nature might have more in store before spring!

- Check that your home is well insulated. Put weather stripping around doors and windows to keep in warm air. Covering windows with plastic on the inside also keeps cold air out.
- Keep space heaters at least three feet away from furniture and drapes and keep fire extinguishers on hand.
- Make sure your carbon monoxide detector is working!
- To avoid having pipes freeze, keep the temperature of your home constant, let cold water drip from faucets and open cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the pipes. Know how to shut off water valves in case a pipe does burst.
- Have extra blankets, sleeping bags and warm winter clothing available in case of a power outage.



WV VOAD is a humanitarian association of independent organizations that may be active in all phases of disaster. Its mission is to identify unmet needs and facilitate efficient streamlined service delivery to those imperiled or impacted by disaster while eliminating duplication of effort through cooperation, coordination, communication, collaboration in the four phases of disaster: preparation, response, recovery and mitigation.

West Virginia is a member of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.

Agency Reports

WV VOAD member agencies donate time, funds and materials to flood cleanup, recovery and rebuilding around the state. Here's what a few of them have been doing!



Since the federal disaster declaration in July 2017, **Appalachian Outreach Inc.**'s (AOI) storehouse in Moundsville has become a drop-off site for donations. The organization also has delivered donated goods and assisted in bridge assessments. AOI began casework and remains active in the work of the **Marshall and Ohio County Long-Term Recovery Committee**. AOI has worked with the **Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston** and **Marshall County Emergency Services** to use the former Bishop-Donahue High School as a volunteer reception center.

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) contributed more than **\$403,252** toward bridge materials and engineering and about **\$38,297** toward housing materials in West Virginia in 2017. More than **1,900 volunteers** have helped build **45 new homes**, completed **repairs on 21** more and did **clean-up at 40 sites** since the June 2016 flood. Additionally, more than **400 MDS volunteers** have worked with the **WV VOAD Bridge Project** to help build or repair more than **40 private bridges** to replace those that were damaged or destroyed by floodwaters in 2015 and 2016.

During the last quarter of 2017, **more than 100 volunteers** with **Appalachian Service Project (ASP)** completed **13 new homes** in Greenbrier County, finished **repairs on four homes** in Greenbrier County and began **construction on six homes** in Greenbrier County and **one home** in Fayette County. Since the June 2016 flood, ASP and its more than **2,400 volunteers**, including those from partners **Christian Aid Ministries** and the **Conservative Anabaptist Service Project**, have completed **57 homes** in Greenbrier, Nicholas and Clay counties and **repaired 16** more homes. ASP also has committed about **\$13,000** in funding for **two additional new homes**.

Helping with clean-up of the July 2017 flood, **Team Rubicon** deployed **10 volunteers** who worked more than 264 hours in the Wheeling area. They **cleared about 3,120 cubic yards of debris** and completed work on **five recovery and building projects**. Team Rubicon deployed **172 volunteers, 107 of them veterans**, in the Nicholas County area after the June 2016 flood, putting in more than 11,200 volunteer hours and completing work on **more than 100 projects**, with an estimated community impact of **\$325,958**.

If your agency would like to be featured in future Agency Reports, please send information to wvvoad@gmail.com.

Spotlight: West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church helps communities find “their new normal”

In the year and a half since the June 2016 flood changed the landscape and needs of so many communities around the state, the West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church, a WV VOAD member agency, has found itself poised to have an unprecedented impact on disaster recovery.

It took mere hours after the flood hit for phones to start ringing at the conference’s offices in Charleston. People wanted to know where to send checks.

“It’s the largest outpouring I’ve seen,” said J.F. Lacaria, the conference’s executive director for disaster recovery. “Because of the nature of this flood and the publicity, we had other conferences — from Pennsylvania, from New Jersey — also taking up collections.”

The West Virginia Conference has been active in disaster relief and an important member of WV VOAD for many years. The scope of the 2016 flood created new challenges, but also new opportunities for the conference to aid in recovery.

Contributions from in- and out-of-state exceeded one million dollars, and with hundreds of thousands more in grants from The United Methodist Committee on Relief, the conference was able to bring five employees on board to coordinate relief and recovery for the June 2016 disaster.

Director Jack Lipphardt oversees conference response, two case managers work directly with flood survivors and two work-site coordinators oversee projects on the ground.



Rev. Dan Lowther and his wife Sue coordinate the conference’s response to all disasters.

“We are uniquely positioned,” Lacaria said of the team’s ability to help survivors in all phases of recovery. “We are able to do the entire package in-house.”

The conference reports its case managers are working on about 56 cases involving people impacted by the flood and have closed another 49 more.

“We are beginning to receive either a lot of returning or a lot of new cases,” Lacaria said. “We realize the scope of our response is really focused on families that are either slipping through the cracks or lack the capacity to qualify for other opportunities for relief.”

The conference’s staff and volunteers have watched survivors’ needs evolve as long-term recovery moves into its second year.

“There’s this idea of the new normal,” Lacaria said. “It’s impossible to go back to the way it was before the flood, but communities and families are finding their way to a new normal.”

Six United Methodist churches throughout the state and one parsonage have been renovated specifically to house volunteers who want to help. Those facilities have hosted about 1,180 volunteers since recovery began.

“They have made a commitment to do that not only in response to the 2016 flood, but for disasters we know are coming in the future,” Lacaria said.

“We would not be able to begin to do all that we are doing without the generosity of the volunteers who come from across the country, from many different faith communities, to be part of our response and



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Disaster Case Management Program — One year in

It's been a little more than 12 months since WV VOAD became the sub-recipient of the state's Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP) for the June 2016 flood.

Case managers are helping survivors in Clay, Fayette, Greenbrier, Kanawha, Jackson, Monroe, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Roane, Summers and Webster counties.

Case managers working directly with the DCMP already have closed approximately 965 cases, but another 646 families and individuals in that program still have unmet needs and open cases. Many additional cases are being actively managed by other case managers with Catholic Charities West Virginia and the West Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church (see story on pg. 5)

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VOAD's response," he said. "We are ready to connect with any church or volunteer groups that would like to come to West Virginia and continue the work of long-term recovery that we think will take five or six years to complete."

For the conference's two-person disaster response coordination team, the Revs. Sue and Dan Lowther (a WV VOAD board member), work began before flood waters even started to recede.

"They are the ones who are the front-lines people, responding to any disaster as soon as it happens," Lacaria said.

In June 2016, the Lowthers had just received new pastoral appointments to three churches in Mullens and Pineville. Their moving truck had just pulled up to their new home when the flood hit. They dropped everything and began immediately managing flood response.

Their base of operations was a warehouse in Beaver the conference had just finished restoring. The former USDA storage facility had been given to Raleigh County Emergency Services and in turn passed on to the United Methodist group to be used in disaster response.



A volunteer United Methodist team from Virginia restores access to a Richwood home damaged in the June 2016 flood. Photos by Mike Dubose, United Methodist News Service.

Dubbed the New Vision Depot, it has become the epicenter for the conference's work on the 2016 flood. It eventually inspired the name of the flood recovery endeavor, A New Vision With Hope.

The conference, in collaboration with several long-term recovery groups, has funded the placement and utility hook-ups of 15 tiny homes for survivors who were displaced after the flood. It has provided financial assistance to at least 11 of its own churches that suffered damages. And most recently, the conference partnered with the Fred W. Eberle Technical Center in Upshur County to provide a new home for a family in Kanawha County.

Each year, students at the technical center build and auction off a manufactured home. The conference purchased the 2017 model and had it transported and put on a foundation in Clendenin, where work on the plumbing and exterior is now being completed.

The group also is helping with the finishing work on four other Clendenin-area rebuilds that were constructed by volunteer teams with Mennonite Disaster Service, another WV VOAD member and one of the conference's many collaborators.

Looking forward, the West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church hopes to have an impact on the long-term economic development of areas that are rebounding after the flood, Lacaria said.

"We are seeking a way into those communities to make them healthy and sound and provide a supportive structure to all the families we've helped."

THE JOKE'S ON YOU

by Phil Ryder & YOU



"Ah, it feels quite warm today. How 'bout we play a game of Hide and Seek?"

- Bruce R. • Atlanta, GA



Mennonite Disaster Service Project Director Peter Thiessen and a homeowner celebrate a newly built bridge in Lincoln County.



Volunteers work on a rebuild in Greenbrier County after the June 2016 flood.



The new Elmer Brown Bridge in Mingo County gave 12 families access to their homes after a bridge was destroyed in a 2015 flood.

WVVOAD and its member agencies are always working to help West Virginians recover and rebuild after disasters.

For more information and photos, visit our website, www.wvvoad.org.



A volunteer helps clean mud and debris out of a Marshall County home damaged during the July 2017 flood that swept through northern West Virginia.



Volunteers lay the foundation for a new home in a Clendenin neighborhood that was damaged during the June 2016 flood.



Member agencies spent time doing site cleanup after the July 2017 flood so that home repairs and reconstruction could begin.



Several organizations partnered on funding construction of this home in Fayette County after the June 2016 flood.