



Sue Najarian (left) helps Margaret Gozmanian clean up the mess left in the basement of the Gozmanian house on Brandywine in the Kendallwood subdivision in Farmington Hills on Thursday.



Larry Virtue stands in the basement of his Dunford Street house in Farmington Hills on Thursday. The water level rose to 43.5 inches, as can be seen by the water mark running around the walls.

Boy survives wild raft ride

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dispatched to the area to turn off utilities in homes with flooded basements when they were alerted to Sarmed's plight. They walked over to his porch and found him crying.

Sarmed had already returned home after his harrowing experience. He was bruised but not seriously hurt. "He was all shook up and his parents were no where in sight," Hughes said. "We bandaged him up, gave him ice packs and he called his father."

Sarmed, an eighth grader at Dunckel, said his "parents were upset. They told me not to do it again."

Sarmed's parents are Manuel and Ikhlas Soka. He has two sisters, Holly, 19, and Nancy, 24, and one brother, Sid, 22.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

These kids are shown riding through a big puddle on Kendallwood Drive in the Kendallwood subdivision of Farmington Hills Wednesday.

Hills backyards become rivers

By Noreen Flack
staff writer

Farmington Hills residents wanted to bail out Wednesday after the first day of summer greeted them with a flood of dreary weather.

"This was the worst flood in the 32 years I have lived here," said Soeren Gozmanian, who lives on Brandywine in Kendallwood subdivision near 12 Mile and Farmington Road.

"We had three floods before, but I have never seen anything like this. I had a river in my back yard."

It was barefoot or boots for the Gozmanian family as they worked

together mopping up the remains of the water that flooded their home. "I was up until 3 a.m.," Gozmanian said. "I had pumps emptying out the basement. I had two inches of water in my kitchen and dining room."

The rainstorm began Wednesday morning, by 7 p.m., residents were toweling off.

CARL HASSEL, who lives in the Nova Woods Condominiums at 13 Mile and Drake, said it looked like Niagara Falls in his basement.

"I called the fire department and they were very prompt, very helpful," Hassel said. "They moved

things and turned off the gas to make sure it was safe in our place."

"When I came home around noon," said Monroe Trubley, who lives on Dunford in Westbrooke Manor subdivision next to Kendallwood, "we had water coming out of our sink. It came in through the windows and it was covering the top of the porch. There was a river coming between the two houses."

"Our kids had the boat in the commons," said Joan Harrison, who lives on Colony Park Drive on Colony Park subdivision, across Farmington Road from Kendallwood.

"We just re-did the basement last

year. A lot of our records, books and papers were ruined, but we didn't have any major damage."

Larry Virtue, who lives on Dunford, added to his flood problems when he cut his finger on his sump pump while cleaning.

"It's going to take us a few days just to clean up this mess," Virtue said. "And it's not over. Another good rain and we've got it back again."

Many neighbors pulled together to help each other out and repair the flood damages. "If you need help," Virtue said, "you'll get it around here."



Carl Hassel, Southfield superintendent of schools and a resident of the Nova Woods Condominiums in Farmington Hills, keeps a wary eye on the drain next to his condo Thursday. Maintenance personnel from the complex tied a rope around the top of the

drain and connected the other end to the railing on Hassel's deck. Hassel was told to pull the top of the drain off if it should become clogged with debris as it did during the peak of the flood. The other end of the rope can be seen near Hassel's left hand.

Hills drains rapped in wake of floods

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a Westbrooke Manor resident for 17 years. "It is my understanding that a study was done to improve the drainage system after the '81 flood. We are wondering what happened to the study."

Sunil Padiyar moved to Dunford last month and claims he was misled by the city.

"I had called about the possibility of flood damage before I bought the house," he said. "They told me of one isolated flood in 1969. They assured me that everything would be fine. I found out later that there had been a damaging flood in 1981."

"It was a total devastation," Padiyar said. "My basement was filled with six feet of water. All of our pictures were ruined. They cannot be replaced. Our house was like an island with water surrounding it."

Thomas Blasell, Farmington Hills public services director, said the Oakland County Department of Public Works is aware of the occasional

flooding in the Kendallwood area and releases flood information to prospective homeowners.

"We have a plan in the works for relief to the Kendallwood area," Blasell said. "We are in the first phase of removal and replacement of 50 percent of the sewage system in that area. The pipes are older and cracked and they reduce the amount of inflow that can go through and can not carry excess water."

TWO STREAMS come from north Farmington Hills, bordering West Bloomfield, and combine at Dunford, causing retention of water.

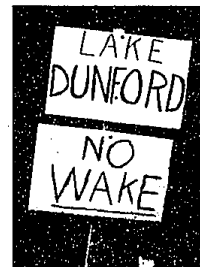
"We need to find an answer on how we are going to retain more water on the north part of town near West Bloomfield," Sever said. "We need to work with West Bloomfield. Our two communities should look at a complete drainage system together."

"It seems by now the problem should have been taken care of," said Dorothy Trubley, a Dunford resident for 31 years. "We're tired of fighting. We expect more from them."

Staff writer Joanne Maliszewski contributed to this report.



Traffic moved slowly through the intersection of Kendallwood and Brandywine road in the Kendallwood subdivision in Farmington Hills Wednesday. Water levels on certain parts of Brandywine were almost three feet deep.



Residents of Dunford in Westbrooke Manor subdivision in Farmington Hills never lost their sense of humor during the flood. This sign appeared along the side of the street Thursday.