By 3PM, this warm front had passed north of Belvidere. Afternoon temperatures rose to the low seventies, with dew points in the sixties. The warm, moist air provided sufficient fuel to spawn destructive storms.

During the warm afternoon, as the wave of low pressure advanced, the surface winds shifted from the south to the east. This created a strong, accelerating wind shear, an important tornado-producing factor. Wind shear is caused by differing wind speeds and directions at different atmospheric heights. Lake Michigan may also have been a factor, as well as the time of year. In April, the lake is cold. Lake Michigan caused the stationary front to hold up over Northern Illinois instead of moving yet farther north.

Finally, the time of day was a factor in the weather. All of this occurred in late afternoon, during the hottest part of the day. Had all this happened at night, the tornadoes may not have developed or been less severe.

At 3:45PM, a large F4 tornado formed southwest of Belvidere. Several eyewitnesses said the tornado had distinct funnels, that merged and broke apart at times. Others said the tornado had an “eye.” These descriptions are characteristic of either a multiple vortex tornado or a tornadic supercell. A multiple vortex tornado contains multiple funnels inside of the main funnel. This is in contrast to a tornadic supercell, which consists of many, distinctly separate tornadoes.

The Belvidere tornado carved a path of destruction from the Chrysler factory east-northeasternly through the south side of Belvidere, along Lawrenceville Road and ultimately into McHenry County. It first began as a tornado near Woodstock, and then transitioned to a strong, well-defined tornado over Belvidere. Along its path, the storm damaged the recently-constructed Chrysler plant and destroyed multiple parked vehicles. The storm directly hit the new Pacemaker Food Store, whose occupants were saved by the scalloped design of its roof. Highland Hospital was all but destroyed by flying glass and other projectiles, the building was completely destroyed. Students at Immanuel Lutheran School were spared because they had been rapidly evacuated to a storm shelter.

In addition, many homes and other properties on the south side of Belvidere were completely destroyed. It was at the newly-built Belvidere High School that most people died. Boone County’s school bus operations used the high school parking lots as a transfer point that worked similar to a hub airport. Students from elementary and junior high school were bused there and joined by high school students on the bus or, depending on where they lived, transferred to another bus to complete the trip home. Both the north and south parking lots were used. Because of this arrangement, a very large percentage of Belvidere’s junior high school students remained on the buses or were caught in the parking lots when the tornado struck.

The high school dismissed classes at 3:45PM, and the tornado directly struck the north parking lot five minutes later. Students from grade and junior high schools were sitting on buses in the parking lot or transferring to other buses. Students from the high school were boarding as well.

As the violent weather approached, many students attempted to flee the buses and enter the high school for shelter at the same time others were leaving the building. A fire alarm sounded, adding to the pandemonium. Many students remained on the buses or were caught in the parking lot as the tornado struck.

Entry to the high school became impossible as atmospheric pressure sealed the doors shut. Many found themselves huddled outside as the tornado passed. Buses were violently tossed about, and some vehicles became airborne. Cars ended up on top of each other. A hailstorm accompanied the tornado.

Despite flying glass and other projectiles, the building was structurally sound and this factor saved many lives. But the severe weather was not over. Fourteen other tornadoes struck the region. At 5PM, a second F4 tornado carved a path through Fox River Grove, North Barrington and Lake Zurich. One person was killed.

Daylight saving time began on April 30 that year. Had daylight time been in effect, the school buses would have undoubtedly been more loss of life and injuries in the parking lots there.

News accounts of the Belvidere storm at the time documented the incredible, widespread rescue effort made by the people of Boone County and Rockford. Despite the significant damage to Highland Hospital in Belvidere, the staff continued to treat existing patients and incoming injuries until the hospital had to close at 9:30PM because of the amount of damage that the building suffered. Other medical personnel in the area also worked tirelessly to treat hundreds of injuries and save lives.

Both Governor Otto Kerner and Senator Charles Percy visited the scene. President Lyndon Johnson declared Northern Illinois a disaster area. Governor Kerner issued a commendation to the Highland Hospital staff for their heroic efforts under extreme conditions.

An already-complicated cleanup was made worse by the 3.8 inch snowfall two days later on Sunday, April 23.
The Boone County Journal
real journalism for a real democracy

---In Our Opinion---
Fifty Years Later

Today marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Belvidere Tornado. For many, it is an unpleasant reminder of a horrific, terrifying day. Yet, the majority of people alive in Boone County today were not born on April 21, 1967, or were elsewhere. The Belvidere Tornado is a story that should be told.

In today’s world, it is easy to forget what happened 50 years ago and why this event is so firmly fixed in the minds of the survivors. We review the latest edition of Mike Doyle’s book, which contains many firsthand accounts of the day. We discuss the memorial erected at Belvidere High School to honor the victims, and finally, how Boone County is working to minimize the loss of life from future storms.

Although F4 tornadoes are rare, bad storms do occur and cannot be prevented. Of course, we hope that one won’t strike as inopportunistly as the 1967 tornado did. We can—and should—pay attention when the weather turns foul, and build our buildings to resist such a catastrophe.

Of equal importance, it is also the anniversary of the tornado aftermath.

What defines us as individuals, and as a community, is how we react when a tragedy strikes. Do we pitch in and help, or sit back and allow others to respond, or worse, do we try to take advantage of the situation?

The tragedy of April 21, 1967 brought out the best in Belvidere and Rockford. Both communities quickly came to the rescue of the injured and the disabled. It was a day when help had to come from within. Many neighboring communities had to address their own storm-related consequences.

The stories of the indefatigable efforts of the medical professionals and others are inspiring. High school students rising to the occasion to help their injured classmates. Neighbors helping one another. A generous community giving liberally to those who needed help.

Belvidere rebounded quickly after the tornado. The can-do spirit of that time is impressive. It illustrates what a community can do when it focuses on moving forward.

The Boone County management or ownership.

Letters should be signed and include an ID or phone number, for possible inclusion in the Journal.

The opinions expressed in the Journal are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Boone County Journal management or ownership.

---In Memory of Little Johnny Tate

In Our Opinion

Boone County Prepared for Severe Weather
By Bailey Appelhans

Those who remember the Belvidere tornado of 50 years ago will want to be reassured that they’re safe in the event that something like that would happen again. Thankfully, the county has taken steps to be prepared in the event of severe weather and tornadoes.

In December of last year, the National Weather Service certified Boone County as a StormReady Community. Meteorologist Mike Bardlow of the National Weather Service presented the Boone County Emergency Management Agency with the certificate.

Storm Ready is a program that encourages communities and their local governments to develop plans to deal with various types of severe weather.

In order to receive certification, the voluntary program uses a grassroots approach to help communities develop plans to deal with various types of severe weather.

Boone County has been working with the National Weather Service to obtain certification. The program requires that attention be paid to the potential for severe weather. Their goal is to put forth information in order to save lives.

According to Bartell, different channels of communication have become essential in aiding the community during severe weather. In 1967, passing along information was a lot more difficult. The National Weather Service Chat is one example of being able to more effectively communicate severe weather today, but Bartell says the use of social media has made things a lot easier as well.

“The more people you can reach, the easier it is to save lives,” said Bartell.

Bartell also said that the county has a more watchful eye on severe weather these days. There are people out there monitoring conditions all the time.

“We have 12 advanced trained weather spotters in emergency management now,” said Bartell. “We have spotters out 24/7, 365 now.”

Weather spotters have also expanded to include many working in the Boone County Sheriff’s Department, Bartell said.

The EMA works closely with the National Weather Service on large outdoor events in the area, such as the Boone County Fair, Heritage Days, and the Autumn Pioneer Festival. The program, which the county has been a part of for the past three years, is known as National Weather Service Large Outdoor Gathering. The service works with the communities and provide information on possible severe weather for an outdoor event’s specific location.

“They will actually zero into that area because there’s a large population,” said Bartell. “They look at anything that can possibly be hazardous, be it high winds or heavy rain.”

Much of those affected by the 1967 tornado were gathered outside at the high school parking lot. Had the tornado occurred at a time when they weren’t gathered outside, many of the lives lost might have been saved.

Large outdoor gatherings have been known to be especially dangerous for communities during times of severe weather. The National Weather Service Large Outdoor Gathering program is important safety measure. An outdoor event like the Boone County Fair, which is attended by many from all over the area, requires that attention be paid to the potential for severe weather. For the safety of those attending the fair, experts specifically monitor the fairgrounds area.

The Storm Ready program started in 1999 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, an area known for having many severe tornadoes. The program has grown since then, helping communities prepare and covering large commercial areas as well.

There are currently 2,036 Storm Ready certified sites in 50 states, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Pacific Island Territories. Boone County is one of the 1,246 counties to be certified. As part of the ongoing certification, The National Weather Service conducts an annual with a certification status update and trained site.

For details on how to participate, please visit their website at www.bonetel3.com/booneco.
Belvidere Tornado Memorialized
By Bailey Appelhans

Half a century has passed since the 1967 Belvidere tornado, and a decade has passed since a memorial was dedicated to its victims. The memorial statue that sits outside the Belvidere High School Performing Arts Center serves as a reminder of those who lost their lives that day.

The statue was dedicated on April 21, 2007. It represents a tornado with 25 rings. The first 24 represent each person who was killed in the tornado that day. Their names and ages at the time of their deaths are etched toward the top of the statue. The 25th “silent” ring on the top represents everyone who was affected that day. The top ring is 40 inches in diameter, representing the tornado’s 40th anniversary at the time. The bottom ring is 3.5 inches in diameter, representing the time the tornado hit, which was 3:50 pm. The circle surrounding the statue is 17 feet in diameter, which represents the 17 children who were aged 17 and under that died in the tornado that day.

Jeff Spradling, owner of Jeff’s Lettering, worked on the project as the designer, project leader, and project manager. He and his wife have owned their design, lettering, signs, and graphics business for over 30 years. Spradling has lived in Belvidere his whole life and grew up hearing about the tornado and its impact on the community. This sparked an interest in working on the project.

“I read an ad in the paper,” Spradling said. “Somebody had put out an advertisement asking for ideas for a memorial.”

Spradling read that newspaper ad just hours before a meeting was being held to discuss designs. He attended the meeting with the basic concept for what the memorial is today.

“Of course it changed a little bit as I got into it, but the general idea was the same,” Spradling said.

He wanted the statue to represent a tornado because he believed it was the best way for people to understand what had taken place. For someone just driving by, seeing the statue instantly tells them what kind of tragedy it represents.

The idea for the number of rings and the dimensions representing the facts of what happened that day was a part of the design from the beginning.

As word got out about the project, the community came together to help raise funds. Several area companies donated materials to help build the statue. Spradling says because of these donations, the project that was estimated to cost about $40,000 only cost $10,000.

Spradling would like to stress that the project went as smoothly as it did because he received a large amount of help from members of the community like John Gallano and Todd Fair. He says it was their support that made finishing the project in time for the 40th anniversary possible. At the time of the original meeting for the memorial, the 40th anniversary of the tornado was just 11 weeks away.

“When I was at this meeting, a comment was made that they wished they would have pursued this earlier so that it could be done in time,” said Spradling. “They didn’t think there was a chance of getting something of this magnitude done.

Spradling says he knew meeting that deadline would be possible when Gallano, a respected local farmer and active community member, came on board to help. The decision to place the memorial outside Belvidere High School was a unanimous one because of the casualties that took place there.

Ten years later, Spradling believes the statue has held up well and he wants to make an effort to keep it that way. He had hoped to perform some maintenance this spring, but says the weather has not worked in his favor.

The statue represents a reminder of the tragedy, but it also represents a time when people in the community were just starting to be more open about the event.

“It was kind of the first time that people kind of talked about it openly,” said Spradling. “It really helped as far as a place to symbolize what had taken place there.”

The statue has received letters and cards of appreciation from family members of those who died in the tornado. He believes the memorial is an important place for people to gather and remember those who were lost.

Those attending the tornado’s 50th anniversary memorial event on Friday afternoon at the Belvidere High School Performing Arts Center might want to step outside for a moment and visit the memorial.

Book review...

The 1967 Belvidere Tornado By Mike Doyle

A sk anyone who was alive in Boone County where they were on April 21, 1967 and they can tell you. A very large percentage of Belvidere’s baby-boomers were gathered that day at the high school. A lethal, F4 tornado raked through the south side of Belvidere, Illinois just as the school let out. The storm left two dozen people dead and over 500 people injured.

Mike Doyle has updated his earlier book about the 1967 tornado to include new material. Doyle has included several new interviews from tornado survivors and information about three more tornadoes that have hit Boone County in the past ten years.

The book vividly describes a life-changing event for those that were there. Doyle focuses on the eyewitness’s accounts of what happened during the storm. He presents their focus on the eyewitness’s accounts of what happened during the storm. He presents their focus on the eyewitness’s accounts of what happened during the storm. He presents their focus on the eyewitness’s accounts of what happened during the storm.

Charles Herbst
In Memory of the Loved Ones Lost In Our Community, That Fateful Day 50 Years Ago.

Gone, But Never Forgotten......

Michael Bates, 6
Cindy Day, 9
Lawrence Decker, 17
Cecelia Eakin, 83
Kent Ferguson, 12
Harold Gustafson, 72
Pamela Haines, 14
Mary Jean Hamre, 65
Craig Hyser, 8
Barbara Johnson, 10
Gilbert Julin, 63
Bruce Lindley, 13

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Belvidere Dental
Alan J. Kossman, DDS
916 Belvidere Rd.
Belvidere, IL 61008
815.544.3111
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Belvidere Cemetery
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Holy Trinity Church
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Belvidere, IL
815-544-2635

The Boone County Historical Museum will be hosting a 50th Anniversary, Open House Event at the museum on April 21st from 5 - 7:30.

Mike Doyle, the Author of, “The 1967 Belvidere Tornado” will be available to sign the book. Also an open microphone forum, will be for survivors to share their stories. Free and open to the public, complimentary refreshments.

The book is also for sale now at the Boone County Museum of History for $21.99. They can be purchased anytime during museum hours Tuesday-Friday 9-5, and Saturday 9-3.
Community. That Fateful Day 50 Years Ago. Never Forgotten.....

Cristine Lutzow, 9
Sandra McLain, 21
Theodore Nelson, 15
David Wayne Poe, 13
Dwight David Shaw, 11
Timothy Smith, 17

Vicky Jo Smith, 9
Jack Stoll, 23
Johnnie Tate, 6
Phyllis Van Brocklin, 13
Rebecca Vogelslang, 8
Norine Wych, 81

In Memory of the Loved Ones Lost In Our Community, That Fateful Day 50 Years Ago.

Gone, But Never Forgotten......

Michael Bates, 6
Cindy Day, 9
Lawrence Decker, 17
Cecelia Eakin, 83
Kent Ferguson, 12
Harold Gustafson, 72
Vicky Jo Smith, 9
Jack Stoll, 23
Norine Wych, 81
Pamela Haines, 14
Mary Jean Hamre, 65
Craig Hyser, 8
Barbara Johnson, 10
Gilbert Julin, 63
Bruce Lindley, 13
Cristine Lutzow, 9
Sandra McLain, 21
Theodore Nelson, 15
David Wayne Poe, 13
Dwight David Shaw, 11
Timothy Smith, 17

Our thoughts and prayers go out to those who lost a loved one and those affected by the 1967 Belvidere Tornado.....
NOTICE OF SALE

AMERICA, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS.

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boonecountyjournal.com

6 April 2017

In Our 21st Year

Real Estate/Foreclosures

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In The Circuit Court of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit

Boone County, Illinois

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

GARRETT M. BURCH, JUDGE

Case Number: 16 CH 00128

Public Notice is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on January 24, 2017, an order entered on March 28, 2017, and under Section 7-1501(c) of the Illinois Mortgage Foreclosure Law, public notice is hereby given that the property is situated in the County of Boone and the State of Illinois, and that the following described real estate:

2212 WAUKEGAN RD., SUITE 301, BANN ECKER, IL 60005

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed in the real estate after confirmation of the sale. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed in the real estate after confirmation of the sale. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Submit your questions to bchrisman@boonecountyjournal.com.

Real Estate/Foreclosures

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In The Circuit Court of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit

Boone County, Illinois

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

GARRETT M. BURCH, JUDGE

Case Number: 16 CH 00128

Public Notice is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on March 28, 2017, an order entered on May 4, 2017, and under Section 7-1501(c) of the Illinois Mortgage Foreclosure Law, public notice is hereby given that the property is situated in the County of Boone and the State of Illinois, and that the following described real estate:

2212 WAUKEGAN RD., SUITE 301, BANN ECKER, IL 60005

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Submit your questions to bchrisman@boonecountyjournal.com.
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
State of Illinois County of Boone) is to certify that the undersigned individual... addresses: 325 W. Perry St, Belvidere, IL 61008 and that the true full names of all persons owning, conducting or transacting such business, with the respective residence address of each, are as follows:

NAME
Frank G. Miller
NAME
Mary Lou Smith
ADDRESS OF RESIDENCE: 16 1/2 Bridge St., Belvidere, IL, 61008
Signed: Steven Knapp, 04/13/2017
Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me this 13th. day of April, 2017, by Silvia Schneider, County Clerk
Published in the Boone County Journal 04/14/2017

ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
State of Illinois County of Boone) is to certify that the undersigned individual... addresses: 218 West Edson, Poplar Grove, IL, 61065 and that the true full names of all persons owning, conducting or transacting such business, with the respective residence address of each, are as follows:

NAME
John Lee
NAME
Erich George
ADDRESS OF RESIDENCE: 528 W. Perry St, Belvidere, IL 61008
Signed: Ricci Ellsworth, 04/06/17
Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me this 6th. day of April, 2017, by Mary S. Steurer, County Clerk
Published in the Boone County Journal 04/07/2017

ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
State of Illinois County of Boone) is to certify that the undersigned individual... addresses: 2105 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL, 61008 and that the true full names of all persons owning, conducting or transacting such business, with the respective residence address of each, are as follows:

NAME
Cynthia Miller
NAME
Mary Lou Smith
ADDRESS OF RESIDENCE: 16 1/2 Bridge St., Belvidere, IL, 61008
Signed: Steven Knapp, 04/13/2017
Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me this 13th. day of April, 2017, by Silvia Schneider, County Clerk
Published in the Boone County Journal 04/14/2017

ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
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NAME
Cynthia Miller
NAME
Mary Lou Smith
ADDRESS OF RESIDENCE: 16 1/2 Bridge St., Belvidere, IL, 61008
Signed: Steven Knapp, 04/13/2017
Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me this 13th. day of April, 2017, by Silvia Schneider, County Clerk
Published in the Boone County Journal 04/14/2017

ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
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NAME
Cynthia Miller
NAME
Mary Lou Smith
ADDRESS OF RESIDENCE: 16 1/2 Bridge St., Belvidere, IL, 61008
Signed: Steven Knapp, 04/13/2017
Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me this 13th. day of April, 2017, by Silvia Schneider, County Clerk
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NAME
Cynthia Miller
NAME
Mary Lou Smith
ADDRESS OF RESIDENCE: 16 1/2 Bridge St., Belvidere, IL, 61008
Signed: Steven Knapp, 04/13/2017
Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me this 13th. day of April, 2017, by Silvia Schneider, County Clerk
Published in the Boone County Journal 04/14/2017

NBAs Playoffs in Full Swing
The 2016 NBA Finals sparked something in me: I started caring about basketball again. Maybe it was the rematch between the Golden State Warriors and the Cleveland Cavaliers...