



COOPERATION | COMMUNICATION
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WV VOAD Quarterly Meetings

Time: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

St. Thomas Catholic Church
624 Kanawha St.
Gassaway, WV

- ◆ June 5
- ◆ Sept. 11
- ◆ Dec. 4

Contact:
WV VOAD
815 Alderson St.
Williamson, WV 25661
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75 volunteers help repair homes in Kanawha County



As part of a **World Renew** project to help West Virginians recover after the flood of June 2016, about 75 volunteers from Michigan spent a week this month in Kanawha County.

The volunteer team from **Westwood Church** in Kalamazoo and **RedArrow Ministries** in Paw Paw helped make repairs to at least eight homes in the Clendenin and Elkview areas. The crew included adult team leaders, college students and high school students who were on their spring break.

Among the projects they did was a basement renovation, floor and drywall repairs, insulation work and window replacement.

World Renew, a WV VOAD member agency, has sent volunteer teams all over West Virginia to help with disaster response and long-term recovery after many disasters. They have helped repair and rebuild homes that sustained major damage or were completely destroyed by flooding.

WV VOAD is so thankful for World Renew's commitment to long-term recovery and their partnership!



SUCCESS STORY: Webster County family displaced by flood moves back home!



Repairs to flood-damaged homes are ongoing in many counties this spring. This **Webster County** home that was severely damaged in the June 2016 recently received major renovations thanks to volunteers and several WV VOAD member agencies that donated funds.

The homeowner and her grandchild had to swim through waist-deep water to get to a safe location during the flood. Her house sustained damage to its floors, walls, siding and heating and electrical systems.

A group of college students from **Minnesota** was on site last month making repairs and installing new siding. Funding for the work was provided by the **United Methodist Committee On Relief (UMCOR)**, **Catholic Charities West Virginia** and **United Way of Southern West Virginia, Inc.** WV VOAD is grateful to our partner organizations for helping get this family back into a safe, secure and sanitary home!

Safety tip: Prepare for a flood before the water gets high

Flooding is never easy to predict. It's always better to take precautions early, when possible, and be safe rather than sorry. Here are a few things to keep in mind if high water is expected.

- **Keep up to date with alerts** from local radio or TV stations, National Weather Service warnings or the FEMA app on your mobile device. Remember, a flood WATCH means flooding is possible, a flood WARNING means flooding is happening or will be happening shortly.
- **Be prepared to evacuate quickly** to a safe destination and know which routes are the safest to take. Fill your car's gas tank, in case you need to evacuate.
- **Make sure your emergency kit is stocked** and ready to go. Replenish any missing items, especially medications or needed medical supplies.
- **Fill plastic bottles with clean water** for drinking, and fill bathtubs and sinks with water for flushing the toilet and washing clothing.
- **Bring patio furniture and other outdoor belongings inside.**
- **Turn off propane tanks** to reduce the risk of fire.
- **Move your furniture and other valuable belongings to higher floors.**
- **Turn off utilities, if told to do so by authorities**, to prevent damage to your home and community. If you have gas and turn it off, it will need to be professionally turned back on.
- **Unplug small appliances** to reduce possible damage from power surges.





Letter from the Director

It's a busy time at WV VOAD. Along with our member agencies, we celebrated a major milestone this month when we dedicated the 50th bridge completed by the WV Bridge Project. It was exciting to see the Associated Press pick up a story on the dedication. Newspapers around the country, from the LA Times and Chicago Tribune to U.S. News and World Report, featured the story. It was great to see the important work of our Bridge Project partners getting nationwide recognition.

The first week of May, nine people from West Virginia will be attending the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster annual conference in Providence, RI. Watch our Facebook page for photos and updates from the conference, and we'll write more about it in next month's newsletter.

Great things continue to happen in West Virginia with recovery. We would like to again say thank you to all those member agencies that are helping with funding, volunteers and coordination. Each of you are making a big difference and changing lives.

Sincerely,
Jenny Gannaway, Executive Director

Sixth new home dedicated in Richwood's Faith Villas



WV VOAD Disaster Case Manager Michelle Isaacs and Alyssa Hill with Neighbors Loving Neighbors helped welcome Evelina Marlowe (center, pictured with her granddaughter) into her new home.

Many WV VOAD member agencies played a part in getting Nicholas County flood survivor Evelina Marlowe into her new home. She is the newest resident of Richwood's **Faith Villas**. After her longtime home was destroyed during the June 2016 flood, a WV VOAD disaster case manager helped her through the long recovery process. Her new house was built by **Appalachia Service Project** with additional funding provided by **United Way of Southern West Virginia, Inc.**

Neighbors Loving Neighbors teamed with several other VOAD member agencies, along with local businesses, private donors and **Nicholas County's long-term recovery group**, to develop Faith Villas. The neighborhood, located on the site of Richwood's former hospital, has provided permanent, safe housing for flood survivors receiving assistance through the Disaster Case Management Program. We are so excited to see another flood survivor recover and find a new place to call home. This kind of long-term recovery is possible through the dedication and collaboration of our member agencies and donors!

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.



Two dozen volunteers with Team Orwigsburg traveled from Pennsylvania to install prefabricated bridges in Maysel (above) and Bickmore (below).

materials and heavy equipment to install them.

The recipients of the new bridges included two families in Maysel and Bickmore, Clay County, whose bridges were destroyed in the June 2016 flood, and a flood survivor in Clendenin, Kanawha County, whose bridge decking was replaced due to severe damage from that flood.

Team O has been working for two years in conjunction with the **WV VOAD Bridge Project**, an effort by West Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, its member agencies and other organizations to rebuild private access bridges that were damaged and destroyed during flooding. The project has built 56 new bridges for flood survivors in nine counties since December 2015.

Team Orwigsburg helped fund and construct two bridges last spring in Clay County as well. This year, funding for the projects was provided by **WV VOAD**, the **West Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church** and the **United Way of Central West Virginia**.

The **United Methodist Conference** and the **Kanawha County Long-Term Recovery Committee** also provided additional funding for Team Orwigsburg to replace the decking on a bridge in Kanawha County.

The group's workspace in Orwigsburg is provided by **Bartush Signs**, the family-owned company of Team Orwigsburg co-leader **Chris Bartush**.

Team Orwigsburg had long been involved in community projects in Pennsylvania and had helped with rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina before being approached about attempting the innovative bridge project in West Virginia.

Bartush said the bridge prefabrication and installation turned out to be very similar to his work installing signs.

"Up until last year, no one had built a modular bridge like we had," Bartush said. "They weren't sure it could be done that way. They were just amazed we could build a bridge like that and truck it in in pieces."

WV VOAD coordinates the engineering and funding of the bridges and the permitting process. Throughout the winter, about 10 to 15 Team Orwigsburg volunteers spent their Saturdays prefabricating the bridges before they were hauled to West Virginia for installation.

"These bridges are truly an example of the whole community coming together to help keep flood survivors safe and connected to their communities," said **Jenny Gannaway**, WV VOAD Executive Director. "We are grateful to the many voluntary organizations that have helped fund these projects and to Team Orwigsburg for the long-term commitment to building and installing these bridges."

Team O returns to WV to help families rebuild

Team Orwigsburg (Team O) has been back in West Virginia this month helping rebuild private access bridges for flood survivors in Clay and Kanawha counties.

Team O, a multi-denominational nonprofit organization from Orwigsburg, Penn., has volunteers who have worked weekends over the winter in a warehouse prefabricating the bridges.

About two dozen volunteers with the group arrived in the state April 11 with trucks hauling the bridge



More photos of Team O, cont. pg. 5

*Team O, cont. from 4*

For more stories and photos, and to keep up with WV VOAD and its member agencies, follow our updated Twitter page

@WVOAD and check us out on Facebook,

[facebook.com/wvvoad/](https://www.facebook.com/wvvoad/).

WV VOAD Bridge Project dedicates 50th bridge

Representatives from many of the voluntary organizations and government agencies that have been instrumental in the success of the **Bridge Project** gathered this month to celebrate completion of the 50th bridge built for flood survivors. This bridge in Ivydale, Clay County is one example of how the collaboration between WV VOAD, its partners and all those who work with the Bridge Project makes a real difference in the lives of West Virginia families. These bridges keep flood survivors connected to their communities and help mitigate future flooding. WV VOAD is so grateful to all those who've made the Bridge Project a success!



Mennonite Disaster Service honored in Greenbrier County



Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) was honored for its work helping Greenbrier Valley residents recover and rebuild after the June 2016 flood.

The faith-based group has sent multiple teams and project managers to the area since right after the flood, which was declared a federal disaster and left 23 people dead across the state.

MDS volunteer crews first came to Greenbrier County, one of the counties that sustained the heaviest damage, to help with cleanup, and then their work transitioned to that of rebuilding and recovery.

Although many MDS volunteer teams and project managers have rotated in and out to complete projects in Greenbrier County, the current and final group was honored March 15 on behalf of their predecessors for all of the work MDS has completed in the county. They were presented with a plaque in appreciation of their contribution to flood recovery in the Greenbrier Valley.

While the organization has completed its slated projects in the Greenbrier County area, WV VOAD and other member agencies continue to actively work on rebuilding and recovery projects throughout that area.

MDS and its volunteer teams also continue to provide coordination, financial support and volunteer labor in other flood-damaged areas around the state and it remains an important partner in the WV VOAD Bridge Project.

MDS volunteers came to Greenbrier County from around the country and beyond: Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, Kansas and Canada. They built 14 new homes just in the county and, through collaboration with Amish Storm Aid teams, helped construct another 22 new homes there.

MDS also has worked to make major repairs and renovations to countless other flood-damaged homes throughout the county, said Cathy Rennard, Disaster Case Manager Supervisor with WV VOAD.

Last summer, MDS crews also completed work on a critical WV VOAD Bridge Project in the western part of the county, building a new access bridge for a family who had lost theirs in the flood.

“They have been a fixture here, and an essential part of recovery in the region,” Rennard said.