

# Severe storm

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to the west and north it was nearly black.

Around the small town of New Kingstown, Cumberland County, the evidence of this being a killer storm was strewn all over the streets. Trees were stripped of their leaves; branches were scattered all over the place; an ambulance was on the scene where a tree had toppled; and water was nearly everywhere. Still, there wasn't enough rain coming down when I passed through to give the windshield wipers a fulltime job. Evidently there was a storm ahead of me, and another one coming up the rear.

With much of the area around Harrisburg being concrete and blacktop anyway, there wasn't much damage to be seen. Once the highway had wound its way back into farming country, the trail of the storm could be easily picked up.

Fields were absolutely saturated with water. So much, in fact, that they had to pass some of their moisture on to the air. A very low and dense fog hung over most fields, giving them an out-of-this-world appearance. Water stampeded out of fields and areas which weren't adequately prepared through conservation practices were torn apart.

One farm pond near Middletown had actually ruptured and a sea of muddy water raced to lower ground,

taking a sizable portion of the bank with it. One field after another was soaked. Lower and flat fields had been turned into lakes.

South of Elizabethtown, along Route 283, the first evidence of hail became apparent. No significant amount of any form of precipitation was falling at the time this reporter passed through, but the flooding and white accumulations of hail proved that something had happened.

Between Mount Joy and Lititz the storm had really left its marks. Water across the roads was nearly a foot deep in some places. Some fields were ripped up and swept away by the raging water. Visibility was poor due to the darkened sky and light gray mist hovering over fields.

Lightning struck hard and the thunder cracked again as the second storm of the evening passed through the area. The wind was powerful enough to topple buildings and trees. Sheets of rain caused traffic to crawl and even come to a standstill. Water carried mud out of fields; wind and hail shredded plants and property. Wednesday morning the victims woke up from a genuine nightmare to assess the damage.

Charles Snoke of the ASCS office in Carlisle estimated the storm came through Cumberland County in a path which was two to three

Entire fields and adjoining areas were turned into lakes by Tuesday evening's cloudburst. This area between Mount Joy and Manheim was

flooded. Note the partially submerged car to the left of the house.

miles wide. He noted that barley fields were extensively damaged with many stems broken by hail. Half or more of the crop from those damaged fields is probably lost. As much of a third of the wheat was damaged so badly that it cannot be picked up.

As far as corn is concerned, Snoke said it was still too early to make an accurate judgement as of Thursday afternoon. Like Bair, he advises farmers to take a wait and see attitude. "No doubt it will be hurt, but a lot of it will come back," he said.

Hay was hammered to the ground, and although much of it is still flat, it's expected to come back for the most part. In addition to crop and vegetable damage, Snoke

also reported damage to roofs, silos, and trees.

According to Bair, some of the tobacco crop between Intercourse and White Horse can be written off as a total loss. "Small grains were chopped off ... looks as though they went through a chopper," the Lancaster County Extension agent said. Hay and corn should come through, Bair continued, "give it at least a week to see."

Associate Lancaster County Extension Agent Jay Irwin was quoted as saying that potatoes in the area "were pretty well broken down." Some fields of tomatoes were nearly wiped out.

The combination of high winds, rain, and hail also blasted orchards which were

## Joanne Spahr joins staff

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change social committee, and active in English and forensic clubs, winning various awards in speech contests.

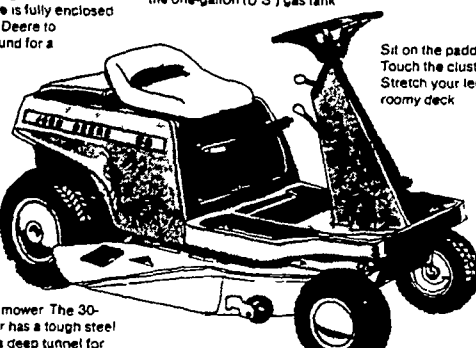
In addition to writing, her interests include sewing, and needlework, antique collecting, calligraphy, camping, hiking, and photography.

in the storm's path, with some estimates of losses exceeding 50 per cent.



Joanne M. Spahr

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