**Tornado Strikes Central Illinois**

By: Priscila Canchola and Kiara Stein

Tragedy hit Central Illinois on a calm Sunday morning on November 7. Washington, Illinois was one of the more badly destroyed areas with the greatest damage. Many houses were lost and a few lives were, too.

Diego Salazar is a Morton resident, but works at a Mexican restaurant in Washington. Salazar was working that Sunday morning when the tornado touched to small town. Salazar thought the sirens were just a precaution to the tornado watch but soon found out that it was a much graver situation than he thought.

The tornado was recorded just outside of the restaurant by Salazar before he decided that he should take himself and the customers into the restroom as there was nowhere else to go. Salazar’s initial reaction was “to record but then I got scared and decided to move away from the windows.” It was a scary day for all of Central Illinois.

Adam R. of Washington on the hand got a little closer to the tornado than anyone would’ve liked to. Adam R. is a manager at Firehouse Pizza in Morton. R.’s house was destroyed in the tornado leaving him and his parents without a home.

Adam R. was not left alone as almost 200 houses in Washington alone were all destroyed by the tornado. Due to the devastation Adam R. did not want to be identified as one who lost his home.

In the aftermath of the tornado, many citizens who had not been affected wanted to help the tornado victims. Desperate to help, Fili Canchola of Morton is a college student at Eureka College, wanted to help with the disastrous event that left many homeless.

Canchola said he helped on Monday November 8 and Tuesday November 9, but officials did not want any more citizens helping with debris. Not only did Canchola help in Washington, he helped in other places as well. “I first went to Washington, but then I went to Pekin because many seemed to forget that they were hit too,” Canchola states.

Deanna Stein of Morton is another citizen that went to help the victims of the tornado in Washington. She was happy that she could help and also said that it was very calming to the soul. Washington was very lucky to have a community with citizens willing to help.

When asked what Deanna Stein’s intake was on how communities surrounding Washington and the way that they are reacting to devastation her response was, “Very impressed and proud of how the Mid-Illini communities have come together. This area, deep down, truly has a heart of gold. Society as a whole tends to be faster paced and having less of the personal connection due to the all the media. So it is very refreshing to see how people have stopped what they are doing, stepped up to the plate, and opened their heart.”

Some citizens are still helping with the destruction of the tornado that hit two weeks ago. Kim Bill is one of those citizens that are still helping with the destruction. Kim Bill is helping with the food drives and is taking canned food to those in need.

Luckily Central Illinois communities have come together, and even members of the Chicago Bears have come down to support the victims. Going through this traumatic event as a whole has given many hope.