

Flood of donations to Joplin may be next disaster

BY RAYMA BEKEBROCK DAVIS
Democrat editor

JOPLIN—According to Candy Adams, area SEMA coordinator, another disaster is about to hit Joplin because of the stream of unsolicited items arriving daily to help those devastated by the deadly tornado.

Adams says the best help anyone can give is to donate money to the charitable organization of your choice. That money can be used locally in Joplin to fund response and recovery, to obtain goods and services locally and to provide direct financial assistance to survivors who can take care of their own personal needs. Loaning equipment for clean up is also a good way to help.

Right now the city's established warehouses are overloaded, especially with used clothing and shoes as well as water, toothpaste, soap and deodorant. Valuable time is being spent and critical resources are being redirected from the most important work to deal with sorting and storing goods.

While the social network is trying to help through these donations, it would be better to go to the National Donations Management

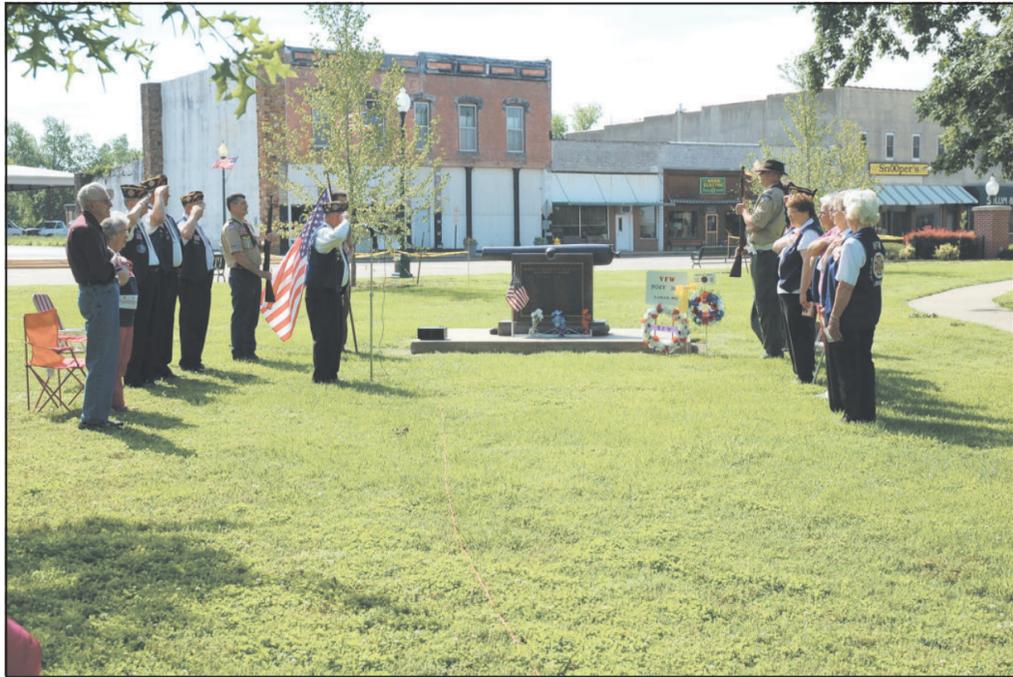
Network to find out how to donate to charitable organizations.

It is also possible in Missouri to call 1-800-427-4626. You can go to 211Missouri.org or call 211 to find out how to volunteer or help in the manner needed.

If you go to the website, once at the home page of 211 Missouri, there is a link "Joplin Tornado Recovery Volunteer Opportunities". At that link, by date, is a list of volunteer activities. For instance for today, Wednesday, June 1, there is sandwich making and delivery being held at Forest Park Baptist Church. Each volunteer activity lists how many people are needed, the time for the service and a place to register. There is also a form all volunteers must fill out to turn it at the time of the service. It is a release and waiver form which also acknowledges risk, insurance and photography release.

If you prefer to give money, there is a link "Donate Funds". The link gives the address for monetary gifts. The address is Joplin Recovery, P.O. Box 14507, St. Louis MO 63178-0507.

Adams says there is no need to sort and store monetary donations, and right now they help the most on the road to recovery.



Lamar Democrat/Richard Cooper

With a predominance of gray and white hair, about 40 participants and attendees turned out for the annual Memorial Day services on the Barton County Courthouse lawn. VFW Post 3691, American Legion Post 209, and Boy Scouts Troop 207 took part in the 30-minute program to honor America's veterans.



Photo for the Democrat courtesy Jill Fast

pproximately 20 cars were on the square on Thursday evening for the first of five cruise nights to be held in conjunction with the Fourth Thursday on the Square.



Photo for the Democrat courtesy Jill Fast

The Downtown Association/Missouri Main Street provided the pulled pork sandwiches for the Fourth Thursday on the Square. The bbq pork was prepared by Doug Davis. In front from left Pat and Carol Barr. In back from left Doug and Rayma Davis and Betty Kuhn. DTA raised \$400 for downtown revitalization.

First Fourth Thursday is a success

BY RAYMA BEKEBROCK DAVIS
Democrat editor

LAMAR—This year's first Fourth Thursday of the Month event on the Lamar square was a success last week, and this year's music and food on the square also includes a monthly cruise night, just one more attraction to the square from May through September.

The music was provided by Geno

Geblin, who played a variety of music, and those who attended were treated to Doug Davis's pulled pork sandwiches. For five dollars there was a sandwich, chips and a drink. The proceeds will help with the activities of downtown revitalization through the Downtown Association and Missouri Main Street Connection. Next month the annual civic organization will sell the meal for a fundraiser for another im-

portant civic cause. The cruise event brought in 20 restored cars for visitors to admire. There was a 50/50 pot and drawings while the event went on. Although the event is slated to run from 5:30 for a couple of hours, the square was still busy at 9 p.m. Don't miss out on the event this month on Thursday, June 23.

Careful! There may be leprosy among us

An article that appeared in Health magazine recently is cause for concern. It tells of the experience of a Greenville, Miss. dermatologist, Dr. John Abide, M.D., several years ago. An 81-year-old woman visited his office with a raised patch of dry skin on her arm. Although the small lesion looked only slightly abnormal, a series of lab tests revealed that it was a symptom of leprosy.

"I thought, 'Leprosy, are you kidding me?'" said Abide.

Since that time, about 150 people each year in the U.S. are infected with leprosy, a bacterial disease that can lead to nerve damage and disfigurement if not diagnosed and treated in its early stages. In most cases, people are infected after being exposed to saliva from an infected person, usually while traveling in parts of the world where the disease is more prevalent such as Africa and parts of Asia.

A new study in the New England Journal of Medicine may shed more light on the source of some of these cases of leprosy. Armadillos! The leathery shelled mammals, which can be found in 10 states, including Missouri, are the few animals besides humans known to carry leprosy.

There have been several anecdotal reports of leprosy in humans who have handled, killed, or eaten (unimaginable) armadillos. However, another category is even more disturbing, people who have been indirectly exposed by gardening in soil where the animals burrow. That was the case of Dr. Abide's patient several years ago.

Until now, experts haven't been

able to confirm that armadillos could pass the disease to humans. The New England Journal of Medicine provides the strongest evidence to date.

The armadillo population in the U.S. is estimated at 30 to 50 million. The Health magazine article states the animals are concentrated in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Arkansas. However, they are spreading north and east as they adapt to the colder climate. They are now found as far east as South Carolina and as far north as Nebraska and southern counties of Illinois and Indiana. An article in the Missouri Conservationist several years ago indicated that the animals have spread into most of southwest Missouri, and one incident confirmed their presence in Howard County north of the Missouri River.

The armadillo is shy and mostly nocturnal. Their presence is mostly seen as roadkill, and that presence seems to be steadily increasing in Barton County and throughout southwest Missouri.

Some reassurance comes from Richard Truman, Ph.D., one of the authors of the New England Journal of Medicine study. He says, "Leprosy is a rare disease and will remain rare." However, James Krahenbuhl, Ph.D., director of the National Hansen's Disease Program, headquartered in Baton Rouge, La., says, "Still, doctors should be on the lookout for signs (of the disease)." Leprosy is also known as "Hansen's Disease. Krahenbuhl adds, "Most physicians are unaware that leprosy even exists in the U.S., and they miss the diagnosis."

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