Tornado – Proximity to WKU

VFTH

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Anchor Intro: The Bowling Green community is still reeling from last Saturday’s deadly storms.

WKU’s campus was miraculously spared as Amy Bingham reports in this week’s View from the Hill.

Dr. Josh Durkee \ University Meteorologist

Nancy Baird \ Retired, WKU Libraries

“The proximity of devastation to WKU’s campus is not lost on the university. Just a few hundred yards, it would be a very different outcome on the hill.”

Surveillance camera video facing west toward Russellville Road atop Parking Structure three.

“We think we’ve isolated a number of frames where we can see the position and the timing of the tornado.”

Timing that kept WKU virtually out of harms way.

“The path that they took got right up to campus, followed the bypass and kept moving east into different areas.”

But 100 yards away, pure devastation.

Retired WKU Librarian Nancy Baird was sleeping very close to the giant hole in her roof when the tornado hit.

“All I know is I woke up startled in the middle of the night and got up and walked into the hallway and was walking in water.”

Baird says it still hasn’t hit her that she survived such a storm but she’s in awe of the volunteers that have helped clean up.

“I’m just overwhelmed at the number of college students and employees of various companies in town that have been here all day working in the yard.”

Among them, members of the WKU Basketball team.

“We were just thankful to be able to come out here and give back. These are the same people that support us all throughout the year so being able to come out and do whatever we can do is really a blessing.”

Since virtually sun up on Saturday, Durkee says meteorology students have been helping the National Weather Service with assessments.

“This is the kind of stuff we spend our careers and our lives trying to learn about so we can forecast and do a better job helping protect communities from these types of events.”

Something we all will be learning from and recovering from for decades.

“Durkee says his two biggest takeaways from the storms are one, always take the threat of severe weather seriously and two, have a plan for your safety.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

For a complete list of the ways WKU is lending support to the recovery efforts, log onto wku dot edu slash emergency slash tornado-response.

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