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A LOOK AT THE MAJOR NEWS STORY OF 1972 IN SOUTH DAKOTA....
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FOR SOUTH DAKOTA--THE YEAR 1972 WAS A COSTLY ONE--BOTH
IN PROPERTY AND IN LIVES.

THE EVENING OF JUNE 9TH WAS A RELATIVELY QUIET ONE ACROSS
THE STATE, WITH NO MAJOR NEWS STORIES BREAKING.

EARLIER IN THE DAY--THE LEGISLATIVE INTERIM APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE WOUND UP TWO DAYS OF WORK AT THE STATEHOUSE IN PIERRE.
AND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSIONER RICHARD GIBB WAS PREDICTING
A "HOT REPORT" ON PROPOSALS TO TRIM GRADUATE PROGRAMS AT
STATE SUPPORTED SCHOOLS.

MOST SOUTH DAKOTANS WERE PROBABLY SETTLING DOWN FOR THE
WEEKEND ON THAT FRIDAY NIGHT, JUNE 9TH. SOME WERE LEAVING ON
EARLY SUMMER VACATIONS.

BUT IN RAPID CITY IT WAS RAINING...RAINING HARD...AND
RAINING LONG. IT WAS ALSO RAINING UP IN THE HILLS NORTH AND
WEST OF THE CITY.

BY 11 O'CLOCK RAPID CITY TIME...THE TORRENTIAL RAIN FROM
THE HILLS WAS WASHING DOWN ON THE CITY AND INTO RAPID CREEK AND
CANYON LAKE, WHERE WATER WAS BACKED UP AND WASHING OVER THE DAM.

BY MIDNIGHT THAT FRIDAY EVENING--THE DAM AT CANYON LAKE
HAD WASHED AWAY AND WITH IT HUNDREDS OF HOMES AND LIVES IN
THE RAPID CITY AREA.

WHEN THE NEWS OF THE DISASTER IN RAPID CITY SPREAD ACROSS
THE STATE THE FOLLOWING MORNING...NEWSMEN FROM ACROSS
SOUTH DAKOTA, THE COUNTRY AND OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD WERE
CONVERGING ON THE WESTERN SOUTH DAKOTA CITY.

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WHEN THE LIVES WERE COUNTED AND THE DAMAGE ESTIMATED..

THE RECORD SHOWED:

--233 PERSONS IDENTIFIED AS DEAD, WITH FIVE PERSONS STILL MISSING SIX MONTHS AFTER THE DISASTER.

--160-MILLION DOLLARS IN DAMAGE IN A FOUR COUNTY AREA IN AND AROUND RAPID CITY.

--140 BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY THE FLOOD, A FEW TOTAL LOSSES AND NOT YET RE-OPENED.

BUT THE FIGURES ON THE RECORDS DON'T CONVEY THE TROUBLE AND HEARTBREAK OF THE DISASTER.

AS ONE RAPID CITY MAN PUT IT..."I LIKED WHAT I HAD AND WHERE I LIVED AND I'D GIVE IT ALL UP NOW TO GO BACK TO IT."

THAT FROM 30-YEAR-OLD KELLY OLSON, A RAPID CITY CONSTRUCTION WORKER WHO LOST HIS MOBILE HOME AND NEARLY ALL HIS FAMILY'S POSSESSIONS.

"I'D THOUGHT MAYBE I'D FIND MORE THAN THE REFRIGERATOR AND TELEPHONE," OLSON SAYS, "AND I'M STILL KIND OF LOOKING, BUT I'LL NEVER FIND ANY OF IT."

ACCORDING TO WILSON..."THE WORST PART IS LOSING THINGS LIKE THE CHILDREN'S PICTURES AND OTHER ITEMS YOU JUST CAN'T REPLACE AFTER 12 YEARS OF MARRIAGE."

FOR SOUTH DAKOTA..THE RAPID CITY JUNE 9TH FLOOD IS
THE BIGGEST NEWS STORY OF 1972 AND POSSIBLY OF THE LAST
DECADE. BUT MOST PEOPLE IN RAPID CITY AREN'T LOOKING BACK
TO 1972,BUT TO THE NEW YEAR.

ONE OF THE HARDEST HIT BUSINESSMEN WAS LOU HAGGERTY,
OWNER AND OPEATOR OF THE CITY'S LARGEST DEPARTMENT STORE.

ACCORDING TO HAGGERTY..."YOU CAN ONLY TAKE ONE ATTITUDE:
LOOK UPWARD AND FORWARD,THERE'S NO LOOKING BACK."

HAGGERTY SAYS ALL BUT TWO OF THE 44 PERSONS WHO WORKED
AT THE STORE BEFORE THE FLOOD ARE BACK ON THE JOB. AND HE HELD
A GRAND OPENING NOVEMBER 15TH IN AN EFFORT TO GET HIS
BUSINESS BACK TO WHERE IT WAS IN THE PRE-FLOOD DAYS.

RAPID CITY TODAY?...THE DEBRIS CLEAN UP AND RESTORATION IS
ABOUT DONE. THE ONLY REAL EVIDENCE OF FLOODING NOW IS
THE DENUDED AREAS, AND MOST OF THAT WAS RESEEDDED TO GRASS
THAT BEGAN TO GROW BACK BEFORE WINTER RETURNED.

THE CITY'S ECONOMY IS RECOVERING..BOLSTERED HEAVILY BY
FEDERAL FUNDS AND WORK. A BUILDING BOOM IS REPORTED,SETTING
A RECORD IN NOVEMBER, WHEN THE 11-MONTH TOTAL VALUATION
REACHED MORE THAN 13-MILLION DOLLARS. THIS WAS MORE THAN FOR
THE PREVIOUS RECORD YEAR OF 1961 WHEN THE 12-MONTH VALUATION
REACHED 12-MILLION-900-THOUSAND DOLLARS.

HOWEVER, WHILE THE ECONOMY AND THE BUILDING IS BOOMING...
SOME OF THE SCARS OF THE FLOOD REMAIN...AND ARE LIKELY
TO FOR SOME TIME. AS OLSON PUT IT..."I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW
ANYONE COULD SAY THEY ARE BETTER OFF NOW. I HAD SOME PERSONAL
PROPERTY INSURANCE."

BUT OLSON SAYS.."I'D GIVE ALL THAT MONEY BACK RIGHT NOW
IF I COULD GO BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS BEFORE THE FLOOD."
MANY IN RAPID CITY FEEL THAT WAY.