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Flash flooding

Lehman's cleans up enougn to open front lobby Tuesday

By LAURA SIEDLECKI Staff Writer

KIDRON - Just as CEO and President Galen Lehman wanted, the front lobby of Lehman's opened Tuesday around noon after countless

"The little pats, caring looks hours of cleaning. and volunteer workers were the only thing that stood between me and a total col-Lehman's kept customers affected since the fa affected since the fa affected since the factor and Facebook "friends" updata ed with status updates and pic-tures galore. The Buggy Barn next to the lobby was filled with 50 percent off flood dam-e-mail lsiedlecki@the-dailyaged merchandise.

Historic flood leaves

inches of mud inside

Lehman's in Kidron

By Beverly Keller Local Edition Editor

Flood waters roared. through all Flood waters ripped through all 32,000 square feet of Lehman's in Kidnen with an appropriate through the same through the same transfer to the s

Kidron with an unprecedented fury

Kidron with an unprecedented rury that left inches of mud and lots of

clean up to be done inside the store lo-

As Galen Lehman who serves as CEO and President of Lehman's said,

"Lehman's Kidron store had three feet

of floodwater in it this morning. We'll

be closed for days. I feel like crying. In-

stead, I'm going to roll up my sleeves.

Many others took that initiative and

rolled up their sleeves as well. All em-

ployees were asked to come to work

proyees were asked to come to work dressed to clean. They wore work boots

and brought squeegees and made the

best of a bad situation as they attempt-

ed to remove water that in some places

was still over 18 inches deep.
According to Greg Wood who
serves as Lehman's E-Commerce Di-

serves as Lenman s.E. Commerce Di-rector and Web Master, the commu-

has really stepped up to help the

community of Kidron

Flood waters rushed.

water throughout the store," he

"Water came in three feet deep and it

was moving. Merchandise floated

from room to room amid the mud,

leaves and cornstalks that washed off

local fields. Our biggest job now is sort-

ing through what is undamaged, what

is damaged but still sellable at a dis-

count and what must be thrown away.

might rust or corrode.

He noted in a post on Facebook

that the "throw-away" pile includes
100s of books, dozens of bottles of

Lehman's pop and anything that

Wood noted that area churches,

businesses and even students at Cen-

tral Christian School have offered to

lend a hand. "It's times like these that

thankfully, no one was injured.

Cleanup will continue and the Lehmans are asking those who are interested in volunteering to call 1-888-438-5346. Lehman hopes to open additional departments each day. He said they hope to have

the book department open today, along with the house-

The catalog, warehouse, phone ordering department, shipping and website were not affected since the facility is at

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Lehman's in Kidron devastated by floods



the water went down pretty "It's pretty devastating,"

through Kidron early Monday morning as snowmelt

first employee to arrive at the store at around 5:30 a.m. "When I came in, water had just started coming over the



id from the floor at Lehman's. Owners estimated about \$100,000 in flood damage was

Lehman's

really show how a community can come together, Wood posted in rets sponse to offers of support placed on sponse to offers of support placed on the store's website and Facebook page. He also indicated that several other homes and businesses in the second other homes. (Continued From Page A1) "It seems like (the damage) other homes and businesses in the area shouldn't have happened to this capacity," said Lehman

had been affected by the flooding but Ervin. Lehman Ervin said she was thankful the warehouse was off-site and business was still It was noted that phone and wet site orders were still being taken at up and running there. She said she was thankful the "flash flood" went through filled as the center for that operati the store when no employee is in nearby Dalton and was not r customers were there. However, she was upset about the lost business, all the cleanup that had to be fected by the flooding.

As of press time on Tuesday done and the expected over-time that would be added. "It's horrible to see hand-



Lehman's Employees Wake to Watery Nightmare-3-feet of Water & Mud Floods Kidron Store Glenda Lehman-Ervin, vice president of marketing for Lehman's Hardware in Kidron, surveys water and mud soaked toys at the store. About 3 feet of water flooded the store Monday morning as snow melted along with rain as the nearby Sugar Creek overflowed. In the rear of this photo the wall shows store. About 3 feet of water flooded the store Monday morning as snow melted along with rain as the nearby Sugar Creek overflowed. The water stain of how high it was in the store.

In the rear of this photo the wall shows

red a river of water lite was flooding the store. Outside in the Kidron lly running through the uare where Kidron Glenda Lehman Ervin ad and Emerson Road ce president of marketect, about 3 feet of water flooded the intersection. Fighting back nook and cranny" of the

ing for Lehman's said imployees discovered ater coming in the store at 5:30 a.m. entering at the north end where the 32,000 sq. ft. store good stoves are displayed. The water came Fork of Sugar Creek as the snow began to melt By 6 p.m. water, mixed

said Galen Lahman, presi-

dent of Lehy

already

down

KIDRON Tuck your pants into your

boots," said Glenda Lehman Ervin. "You're not

After a call around 5 a.m. Monday morn-

ing, employees arrived at Lehman's dressed in

rubber gloves and rain boots to trek through

the mud and water covering the ground and

Signs in the center lobby outlined where vol-

unteers were needed. Valley View Mennonite

Church and staff and students volunteered to

and cast iron pots throughout the building.

going to believe this. ... I'll try not to cry"

2007 the store underwent a new complete renovation to expand their retail room. In 2008 the garden shop area was odeled and in 2010 was remodeled. "We had verything in place the way we wanted it and that's all it is." Ironically

on display on the top

shelves in the store.

part of the store on uesday and open other areas as they are could top \$100,000 and is was about how we love

checking with their insuris not a good mix," she ance company to see if said as she walked into the original part of the

radio getting the word out

and posted a note on

Facebook that the retail

ore would be closed

today. Galen Lehman,

President of Lehman's

said they will be going 24

hours until the cleanup is

done and hopes to at

east open the center

still coated the area. "A disaster of this scale could break us, but were

cleanup. "They are all pitching in with a real

sense of concern," she said. A hand written sign

hung in the store which read that Gerber Poultry

would be bringing lunch

enda said Gerber

Poultry underwent a

when they had a fire so

they know what we are

Water and wood floors

for everyone at the store.

Teams of store employees are working around the clock to inventory and remove damaged items and clean up the the thing to do," Leimeister said.

Poultry provided lunch for the workers while Ventrac brought tractors to help move items and the local fire department hosed down the parking lot.

Despite the seeming impossibility of the task, Lehman Ervin was optimistic that the store would be open for business Tuesday morning. "We're going to open the center of the store. We're triaging what can be saved and working outward toward the ends of the store."

There were some bright spots, she noted. The ware-He continued to shake his were high enough to have escaped damage. And while were high enough to have escaped damage. And while there was damage to outlets, power strips, computers, etc., there was damage to outlets, power strips, computers, etc.,

As for cleanup, Lehman E creek flooding in 100 years," said Scott Ervin of Creek flooding in 100 years," said Scott Ervin of Creek flooding in 100 years, said Scott Ervin of Creek floo marketing, said employees Ridge Builders, who was inspecting the store's electrons what merchandise amployees system. He said that had the waters risen above the switch-system. He situation could have been far worse.

sifting through the products to write down the bar codes to keep track of the inventory.

participate in the cleanup of the muddy mess. About 18 inches of water flooded every inch of Galen Lehman, CEO and president, said he's the 32,000-square-foot store, forcing merchandise grateful for the volunteers and Gerber Poultry "Our goal is to open a part of the store (on

off the shelves and carrying stoves, refrigerators "This isn't going to be a good story," said Tuesday)," he said. "I know it's a tall order." founder Jay Lehman. "What can I say, it's a He said the store never experienced any type ness ... it's terrible, I never thought this would of flooding before so the Lehmans are not sure what their insurance will cover. He expects more than \$100,000 in damage.

See Pg. A5 — LEHMAN'S



Lehman's founder, Jay Lehman, pushes a floor cleaner through the store in Kidron after floodwaters left mud and

FLOOD

from Page A1

The rushing water left the store in shambles. "When I walked in, I thought I was going to throw up," said Glenda Lehman Ervin, vice president of marketing. "I still cannot believe the scope of this mess. Every single nook and cranny is trashed. The stove room filled up first, crested, and then whoosh—it just flowed through the whole store."

Not an inch of the 32,000-square-foot store was left untouched. Heavy crocks were tossed around and freezers and refrigerators knocked over. The toy area was filled with a two-foot deep pile of ruined toys and items washed in from other departments. Aisles throughout the store were blocked and the floors littered with products swept off the shelves by the floodwaters. Any products remaining on the lower shelves were coated with mud.

mud left behind. Volunteers from Valley View Mennonite. Kidron Mennonite, and Gentral Christian School pitched in to help, along with other Kidron residents. Neighbors Charlene Leimeister and her son, Jacob, heard about the darhage and walked over to join the work crew. "It's just Area businesses offered assistance as well. Gerber

Lehman's gets hit by 18 inches

while he started up a little the electrical system was not significantly damaged.

"We just can't figure it out. There's no record of the start from of As for cleanup Lat water. there was damage the electrical system was not significantly damaged.

"We just can't figure it out. There's no record of the creek flooding in 100 years," said Scott Ervin of Green creek flooding in 100 years, said Scott Ervin of Green creek flooding in 100 y

to be thrown away the saved while no damage estimates were yet away what had been so to be thrown away. Unfortul gears, the situation could while no damage estimates were yet available, the unable to throw out the flood was a huge setback in what had been shaping up to flood was a flood was a flood was a huge setback in what had been shaping up to flood was a f

away. Instead, employees and while to recover from this."

While no damage what had been shaping up to flood was a huge setback in what had been shaping up to be a good business year. When asked how people can help, Lehman Ervin said, "Remember us when we open again. away. Instead, employees and sifting through the product and It'll take a while to recover from this."



Mike Schenk photo/www.

Jay Lehman uses a Shopbuydrphotos.com Vac to help clean the floors in the showroom at Lohn