
We must learn to work together

Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.” – Vince Lombardi

Aug. 1, 1985 was not a good day for the residents of Cheyenne. Within less than 3 hours, more than 6 inches of rain fell upon the city. The horrid flood created by the rain and hail-storm killed 12 and caused more than \$60,000,000 of property damage.



**JOHN
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My home sustained minor damage, but when I went to bed that night, I knew that I had a whole lot of work waiting for me on Aug. 2, 1985. The work that I needed to accomplish would not be performed in my law office, but instead would be performed as I helped my neighbors.

Shortly after the storm subsided, Cheyenne's mayor reached out to my church and requested assistance in cleaning up the massive mess caused by the Aug. 1, 1985 flood. As anticipated, in the morning of Aug. 2, 1985, I received a phone call from one of my local church leaders. I was given an address and told to drive to that location so that I could help clean up a flooded basement.

When I arrived at the designated location, I found myself surrounded by a fabulous group of young military men from Warren Air Force Base. It did not take us long to complete our assigned task. Thereafter, I

called my church's hotline and was given another nearby location where help was needed in cleaning up another flooded basement. Yes, I became quite familiar with flooded basements on Aug. 2, 1985.

When I arrived at the second location, which was a small apartment complex, I was delighted to see that I would be working with my good friend, Larry Robinson. We were the only two who would be working at this site. The primary and formidable challenge that we faced concerned our need to remove a large, soaking wet and heavy carpet from an apartment's basement.

The young fellow who lived in the apartment (I shall refer to him as Sam) appeared to be very strong and athletic. However, Sam had dislocated his shoulder while attempting to remove the carpet. He sincerely apologized for being unable to help us with this difficult project.

When I saw the long staircase that we would have to utilize to remove the carpet I was less than enthusiastic. Larry, who was and is an engineer, stared at the carpet and stairway for a while. He then told me that he had an idea.

Larry went out to the parking lot and pulled an aluminum softball bat out of the trunk of his car. We returned to the basement and tightly rolled up the carpet. We then folded the carpet over the softball bat.

I grabbed one end of the bat and Larry grabbed the other end. We then slowly and carefully began to drag the carpet over to the stairway. When we reached the stairway we carefully lifted

(i.e. using much more of our leg muscles than our back muscles) the carpet, one step at a time. It took a bit of time, but we were able to remove the carpet and were none worse for the wear. Sam was extremely grateful for our efforts.

Thereafter, Larry and I were sent to another location in south Cheyenne where we, yet again, needed to remove a large and soaking wet carpet from an elderly woman's residential basement. Using the same strategy and technique which we had previously developed at the apartment complex, we successfully removed the carpet.

I was physically exhausted when I finally climbed into my bed on Aug. 2, 1985. As I now reflect upon this experience, I am delighted to report that I did not witness any negative communications or attitudes while I helped to clean up a monumental mess. No one that I observed on that day argued about politics or religion.

In confronting our varied and formidable social and economic messes, I respectfully ask that we along with our federal, state and local political leaders stop engaging in senseless rhetoric and vitriolic communications. Instead, let's follow Larry's example by taking a long hard look at how we can overcome our problems. Then, let us work together by unitedly pulling in the same direction toward our common good.

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