



Andrew Lauer / Contributed photo

This overhead shot of a house ravaged by a tornado on Thursday was taken with a drone by Andrew Lauer of Alexandria. The house sits on the corner of West Meadow Lane NW and Donna Drive in northwest Alexandria.

# A NIGHT OF DESTRUCTION

## Tornado touches down near Lake Darling, causes extensive damage

**By Al Edenloff**  
 Alexandria Echo Press

**Douglas County** buzzing chainsaws could be heard throughout Douglas County over the weekend as residents recovered from a Thursday night tornado in northwest Alexandria, and straight-line winds

in other areas of 90 to 100 miles per hour. Luther Crest Bible Camp along County Road 11 reported that it lost more than 40 trees in the main area of the camp. About 140 volunteers helped the camp recover, using three skid loaders, trucks and four-

wheelers. By Sunday, the camp estimated that 88% of the clean-up was complete. Two National Weather Service meteorologists, along with Douglas County Emergency Management, reviewed two large areas of storm damage in Douglas County on Friday, May

13 and confirmed that the damage on the south side of Lake Darling in northwest Alexandria was caused by a tornado. That area appeared to have the most concentrated damage to homes, according to the weather service. A tornado rating hasn't been finalized

yet, but the wind speed was reported to be at least 100 miles per hour, which would put it in the EF0 to EF1 range on a scale that goes to EF5. The weather service also reviewed damage on the west side of Lake Carlos and believes that was caused by straight-line winds with a speed

of 90 to 100 mph. Douglas County has declared an emergency and will continue to work with cities, townships and others to review damage across the county and determine a damage estimate. **DAMAGE:** Page 15

## Show of support was 'unreal'

**Police sergeant's home was in path of tornado**

**By Celeste Edenloff**  
 Alexandria Echo Press

ALEXANDRIA – Chad Schroeder was across town when he got a call from his daughter, Gracie, telling him a tree went through their house. He said Gracie had just let their dog inside when the sirens sounded shortly after 7 p.m. Thursday, May 12. She took off running downstairs when what has now been confirmed as a tornado ripped through their neighborhood on South Darling Drive NW in Alexandria. But before she could reach the basement, the tree toppled onto the house. Schroeder said his daughter was about 10 feet away from where

the tree came in. After making sure his daughter was OK, Schroeder hurried home to not only see the damage done to his house, but to also find that his boat was on top of his flattened garage. He said it was the first time in many years his boat wouldn't be on the water for opening day of fishing. Several houses in Schroeder's neighborhood – South Darling Drive NW, Donna Drive NW, Edna Drive NW, West Meadow Lane NW and South Darling Court NW – were damaged in the tornado, which produced 100 mile per hour winds, according to the National Weather Service. "It's a miracle no one



Celeste Edenloff / Alexandria Echo Press

A boat overturned, a garage collapsed and trees went through a house on South Lake Darling Drive owned by Chad and Heidi Schroeder after a confirmed tornado hit the area. The storm ripped through Douglas County shortly after 7 p.m. on Thursday. Many areas around the county were hit hard and damage was widespread.

was injured or killed," said Schroeder, who is a sergeant with the Alexandria Police Department. He noted that as he arrived home, Sgt. Keith Melrose was pulling up to his house to check on everything. "I told him, 'Gracie's OK, she's OK, start checking the neighborhood to make sure everyone else is OK,'" said Schroeder.

The adrenaline was pumping pretty good Thursday evening after the storm and when the Schroeders woke up Friday morning, the extent of what had happened set in. "Then we were in shock and wondered, 'Where do we begin?'" said Shroeder. **SUPPORT:** Page 15

## Agent: Check your insurance policies

**By Celeste Edenloff**  
 Alexandria Echo Press

DOUGLAS COUNTY — Phones have been ringing nonstop for many insurance agencies in Douglas County after a tornado and straight-line winds caused massive damage last Thursday, May 12. Amy Christopherson, State Farm agent and owner of Amy Chris-



Christopherson

topherson Agency in Alexandria, was on the phone late Thursday evening with a family along South Darling Drive who lost their home when a tornado hit their neighborhood. **POLICIES:** Page 16



Celeste Edenloff / Alexandria Echo Press

A confirmed tornado caused significant damage to a house along South Darling Drive in northwest Alexandria shortly after 7 p.m. on Thursday.

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## ALEXANDRIA SCHOOL BOARD Public comment period added back to agenda

**By Celeste Edenloff**  
 Alexandria Echo Press

ALEXANDRIA – A public comment period has been added back to the Alexandria School Board meetings after being put on hiatus since January. Meetings had gotten out of hand with members of the audience

heckling and laughing at those who were speaking, being disrespectful to those speaking, speakers going over the allotted time, speakers making individual comments toward school board members and more. At the Monday, May

16, regular meeting, school board members approved allowing for a public comment period, but not without rules and for one school board member, not without some hesitation. During the discussion about whether or not to allow a public comment period, School Board Member Pam Carlson said she could agree to it but questioned whether it should be on a short-term basis. She asked what would happen if the meetings got out of hand again.

Carlson said against her better judgment she could vote in favor of reinstating the public comment period but would like to make sure the school district and board continued to make sure people were respectful and that they respect the gavel, if it needed to be used. She said the board should review it after a month. As she continued sharing her concerns, someone in the audience laughed out loud at what

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