

Irma's Impact

By Ethan Holcomb & Niles McNair

On September 10th and 11th, Hurricane Irma bulldozed across Florida, causing around fifty billion dollars' worth of property damage and taking many lives along the way. Many Polk County residents consider themselves lucky, as the damage from the storm proved to be much less for the county than for more coastal areas. Lakeland Collegiate High School reporters Ethan Holcomb and Niles McNair consulted William Eberts, the maintenance mechanic at the college, about the damage that the campus received from Hurricane Irma.

"I'd say over the weekend they were still doing some more repairs on the inside, [but] we got most of the clean-up done by Saturday," Bill commented, when



After the maintenance staff removed the oak tree between the LAC and LLC buildings, the stump was all that remained. The fallen oak crushed two smaller trees as it fell.



The maintenance staff collected this pile of debris during cleanup, placing it near the front of the campus. Total cleanup time was estimated at fifty hours.

asked about damage repair and clean-up. Most of the damage was near the back of the maintenance building, in between the LAC and LLC buildings, where a large oak tree fell over and crushed two smaller trees. Luckily, nothing else was damaged by the tree, but clean-up was certainly difficult.

Of course, that wasn't the only part of the campus that was damaged. An aluminum awning on the roof of one of the buildings was torn off during the storm and the sign on the LMS building was found hanging sideways. As a proof of the damage, a pile of limbs and leaves from various trees was gathered and put in front of the school. Bill Eberts would also like to applaud Captain Warren of the school security staff, who can occasionally be seen around campus in a golf cart. "He was here throughout the storm. He manned our command center [and] powered the main generator to keep [maintenance] operations up and running over there."