**DAMAGE IN OCEAN PARK, by Jerry Gosselin**

Many of us in New England felt the effects of the recent storm that started late Sunday, October 29. The storm picked up in intensity overnight and became a “Southeaster” meaning the winds came directly off the ocean waters and proceeded right up Temple Avenue and all the streets running parallel to Temple.

As you can see from the photos, the impacts were severe at the Temple Complex. Several large pines fell with one striking directly over the front portion of Porter Hall. A second tree on Temple Avenue fell parallel to the street and struck the stairs at the entrance to the Temple. If the winds came onshore a few degrees to the south, that tree could conceivably have fallen directly on the Temple itself. Another tree directly behind the Temple fell parallel to Colby Avenue in the direction of Porter Hall. That one too spared the Temple from a direct hit.

I have always used the word “miracle” sparingly. But, folks, it is a miracle the Temple did not receive a direct hit.

The clean-up work began in earnest on Tuesday morning. By the end of the day, the tree striking Porter Hall had been removed. To prevent further damage to the building the folks from Blackstone Tree Services cut small portions of the tree at the apex of the roof and lowered each chunk through the rafters and were literally carried out of Porter Hall. When enough of the tree had been removed using that technique, the rest of the tree was pulled up and then cut up in larger pieces for removal.

Other trees that were felled by the storm at the Temple Complex have been cut up and removed. As of this writing (Wednesday, November 1 at 9:00 am), what is left are two large trees lying on CMP wires. Power still needs to be restored to much of Ocean Park south and west of the Temple. There are spotty outages in other areas of OP due to downed power lines and leaning trees. Some cottages, especially back in the woods, sustained substantial damage while others were unaffected.

We are proceeding today with the task of temporarily securing the roof of Porter Hall so that any upcoming weather events will not further damage the building. The front of the building shifted a bit because of the impact, but the Hall and its contents were spared from any visual damage. We are fortunate indeed!

And to those who may inquire, the buildings are indeed insured! There is much work to be done on that front. Thus far our insurance carrier has been very responsive to this new claim.

I will provide additional updates as we move forward. For now, we will continue to work safely and repair Porter Hall as soon as possible.