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Newsday

SPORTS FINAL
THE LONG ISLAND NEWSPAPER


HI 32° LO 30°
MOSTLY SUNNY



NEWSDAY PHOTO / JOHN PARASKEVAS

Snowbound vehicles remain stranded yesterday morning along Route 347 in Lake Grove.

Blizzard of '13

RECORD SNOWFALL - 33 INCHES IN PARTS OF LI

Hundreds of drivers stranded | Amid storm, fire kills boy, 8

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TOP STORIES

LI BURIED IN

■ **Blizzard drops** as much as 33 inches on the Island

■ **Hundreds stranded** on snow-clogged highways

BY LAURA FIGUEROA
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Road crews reinforced by the state will labor through the weekend, if not longer, to dig out highways and secondary routes after a record-shattering blizzard dumped as much as 33 inches of snow on Long Island.

Suffolk County was hardest hit by the storm. Even as Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo diverted 135 snow plows from upstate to Suffolk and local work crews worked around the clock, officials said it was unclear how long it would take to clear secondary town and village roads.

"People need to understand there's a lot of snow out there," Cuomo said yesterday at a news conference at a Department of Transportation facility in Melville. "You have a historic amount of snowfall, it doesn't go away in a matter of minutes."

Suffolk police reported one storm-related fatality late yesterday — a 58-year old man who suffered a heart attack while clearing snow in Selden. In Smithtown, the snow's weight may have caused a partial roof collapse at the Smithtown Lanes bowling alley, police said.

Long Island was spared massive power outages, however, because the winds were not as powerful as the most dire forecasts. By 9:30 last night, 5,456 customers were in the dark, down from a peak of 43,000. The Long Island Rail Road ran limited service yesterday while working toward a full restoration in time for tomorrow's morning rush hour.

Drivers stuck

The blizzard struck with such ferocity Friday night that hundreds of motorists were marooned along highways and local roads that quickly became impassable — with many stuck until well after daybreak yesterday. Air National Guard Members based in Westhampton

The weight of snow may be to blame for a partial roof collapse yesterday at Smithtown Lanes bowling alley.



used snowmobiles and Humvees to rescue 20 of them.

About 50 vehicles, including 18-wheelers, littered Route 347 outside the Smith Haven Mall in Lake Grove through the night. Around 9 a.m. yesterday, firefighters from the Nesconset and St. James departments arrived, knocking on windows to check if motorists were OK.

By last night, the Long Island Expressway, once a virtual snow-covered parking lot, was reopened to traffic. But state Department of Transportation officials said they will close the 27-mile segment of the expressway from Exit 57 eastward from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. today to complete clearing the snow.

Suffolk officials said all county roads — with the exception of County Road 83 — were passable.

New York City and Nassau

County, which fared better than Suffolk, pledged additional crews and equipment to augment the cleanup efforts.

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone described the storm as "unlike anything we've ever seen." Its intensity led so many commuters to get stuck on their way back home from work Friday evening.

"If this storm had occurred two hours later, the hundreds of people who were stranded would have made it home," he said, defending the state's call not to close roadways sooner.

The blizzard unleashed up to 33 inches of snow, as recorded in Medford, and wind gusts to 75 mph, according to the National Weather Service in Upton. The storm total of 30.9 was the highest in Upton since records have been kept beginning in 1949, breaking the De-

cember 2009 record of 26.3 inches, officials said.

From 4 p.m. Friday to 2 p.m. yesterday, Suffolk's 911 call center was flooded with 8,046 calls — more than four times the usual volume.

Injuries reported

Area hospitals reported several cases of blizzard related injuries — slips and falls, sledding accidents and injuries sustained from car collisions.

An amputated finger and a wounded hand were among the snowblower injuries treated at six Catholic Health Services hospitals across Long Island yesterday, said Chris Hendriks, a spokeswoman for the network.

Across the East End, high winds hampered town and state attempts to clear roads of blowing snow. Roads plowed and left free of drifts were buried under

RECORD SNOW



PHOTO BY JEFF DILAVORE

snow within the hour, police dispatchers said at several East End towns and villages.

Wind-driven drifting snow caused severely decreased visibility and at least a few near-accidents on Sound Avenue on the North Fork.

"A plow comes and it's good for three minutes, and then the wind comes again and covers up the road," said MaryAngela Benthall, 19, of Jamesport.

All 32 state parks on Long Island remain closed as staff conducts a damage assessment and handles snow removal, George Gorman Jr., deputy regional director for state parks, said. There are no plans yet to open any of the parks for winter activities.

With Candice Ruud, Scott Eidler, Bill Bleyer, Nicholas Spangler, Matthew Chayes, Steve Wick and John Paraskevas



PHOTO BY JAMES CARBONE

ON THE LIE
NEAR EXIT 63
1:05 P.M. | FEB. 9, 2013

On road closed to cars and trucks, Jerry Ricardo of Yaphank gets by.

INSIDE

Amid storm, fire kills boy, 8 **A4-5**

New England buried **A5**



AP PHOTO

In deep in Portland, Maine

Stranded on LI's snow-clogged roads **A6-7**

The snow map: totals across the Island **A10-11**

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STRANDED

Drivers snowed in overnight in Suffolk

BY MATTHEW CHAYES
AND NICHOLAS SPANGLER

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Hundreds of stuck cars, vans and trucks, blanketed in snow, clogged Suffolk County roadways and left their drivers with a stark choice: Stay the night, or abandon the vehicles to make their way to shelter.

On the Long Island Expressway, on the parkways, on Route 347, on Middle Country and Nicolls roads and elsewhere, at least 175 vehicles remained strewn yesterday afternoon — the standout image of the nor'easter that hit the Island on Friday afternoon, cranked up to blizzard force, and raged until yesterday morning.

"The snow just swallowed them up," Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone said with Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo at a midday news conference. "I've never seen anything like this one."

Police said they rescued at least 150 stranded motorists. The National Guard, with Humvees and snowmobiles, helped more than 20 drivers, said Col. Thomas Owens, wing commander of the 106th Rescue Wing New York Air National Guard base in Westhampton, which Cuomo mobilized.

Authorities were using pay-loaders to haul away some stranded vehicles by late afternoon yesterday.

The county is paying tow truck drivers a flat rate to move vehicles out of the roadways, an effort that is being supplemented by local and state police, officials said. Motorists will not have to pay for moving their vehicles, they said.



PHOTO BY STEVE PROST

Fidel Lainez, left, of Babylon, helps Javier Taveras, also of Babylon, remove snow around his car stuck on the Northern State Parkway.

A Suffolk County police spokeswoman also said vehicles that motorists left behind will not be impounded.

About 200 vehicles were stuck on the LIE during the blizzard, authorities said, with a particularly bad stretch between exits 50 and 60 in both directions. Many vehicles became stuck at Exit 63 in the area of Farmingville, Medford and Holtsville, where some of the Island's highest snow amounts registered.

Heavily trafficked secondary roads where many vehicles were stuck included Nicolls Road, Middle Country Road and Yaphank Avenue.

Cuomo defended the decision not to close state roads earlier Friday, saying that doing so would have left thousands of people stuck at work, or trapped on different roads.

"We wanted people to be able to get home, too," he said. "It's not an easy call."

Officials noted that they'd urged motorists to stay off the roads on Friday.

At the intersection of Route 347 and New Moriches Road, the site of a command post serving dozens of motorists whose vehicles were stranded nearby, the Greater New York Red Cross supplied blankets, snacks and other emergency staples, Red Cross spokesman Michael de Vulpillieres said.

Among the tales of blizzard woe:

Journey from Brooklyn

Richard Ebbrecht left his Brooklyn chiropractic office at 3 p.m. Friday, thinking he'd beat the big snowstorm home to Middle Island. But the storm beat him.

It took Ebbrecht, 47, five hours to reach Exit 63 on the LIE. It took a few more hours to dig his Toyota Camry out of the service road there.

Around 1 a.m. yesterday, he finally made it onto Middle Country Road. And there his car got stuck again, this time for good.

At times, Ebbrecht said, he and about nine other motorists tried to dig themselves out. At other times he huddled in his car, drinking Vitamin Water and listening to the radio.

"We didn't see any plows out there," he said. "We were wondering, 'Did they forget about us out here?'"

Ebbrecht considered himself one of the lucky ones. He was only about two miles from his home. Around dawn, he left his car and walked there.

"I feel bad because there are still some people out there," he said by phone from home yesterday. "There was a diabetic woman and her husband stuck in their car. He walked back four or five miles to their house to get insulin."

A 15-hour trip home

Thomas DeMartino's nearly 15-hour trip home Friday night began in a warm Chrysler in Queens. It ended in the cold of yesterday morning in Selden, wading through hip-deep snow to his home.

DeMartino, 62, a caterer who stayed at Douglaston Manor in Queens until 6:30 p.m. Friday, overseeing final preparations for a wedding party, said it took him three hours to reach Exit 62 on the Long Island Expressway.

By then, he said, visibility was nil and traffic was moving at 5 mph. He made the turn onto

Nicolls Road and began the next one onto Middle Country Road — and that was as far as he got.

"That ramp had not been plowed," DeMartino said.

His car got stuck in an embankment. Soon, he was joined by other motorists in the same predicament, including the driver of an 18-wheeler, he said.

He found a mint in the change drawer and ate that. He shared some bottled water with the truck driver, who lent him his cellphone charger.

DeMartino said he ran the heat intermittently to save gas, buttoned up his parka and scrunched his baseball cap tight.

"We were just hoping someone would come to help us," he said. "We called the police, and they said to stay put, hopefully



43,000 LOST POWER ON LI

BY MARK HARRINGTON

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Power outages were a relative footnote of this weekend's winter storm.

In all, only about 43,000 customers lost power between Friday and last night, National Grid reported yesterday, thanks largely to winds that were considerably less forceful than expected.

By last night, more than 37,000 of those had been restored, and utility officials said they expected to have most of the remaining work done within a day.

"The system held up very well," said National Grid spokeswoman Wendy Ladd. "We didn't get the winds that were predicted, so we lucked out." The company had predicted up to 100,000 outages.

John Bruckner, president of National Grid's Long Island electric operations, said nearly all the utility's work was focused east of the Nassau-Suffolk line. "This was a Suffolk County storm, not only the damage but also the challenges we had in getting to the damage locations," he said.

He said the utility benefited from having hundreds of off-Island crews on the ground before the storm hit. "It always makes a difference," he said.

Bruckner said the bulk of the restoration work will be completed today. Even with rain and snowmelt expected tomorrow, Bruckner said National Grid does not expect significant new outages.

The 43,000 outages — mostly in the East End — contrasted with about one million during superstorm Sandy, when LIPA/National Grid had nearly 15,000 workers on the ground. This storm was handled with fewer than 1,000.

The biggest problem was getting to snow-blocked neighborhoods, Ladd said. "We're having problems getting to Southold, and Brookhaven was hit pretty hard," she said.

Still, the utility, which has taken a leading role for this storm, said it restored power to most who lost it within four hours. "We expect to be able to finish this up in the next 48 hours if we can get access to the homes," Ladd said last night.

Ladd said winds topped out at about 50 mph, lower than the expected 70 mph. As of 9:30 p.m. yesterday, 5,456 customers were still without power.



A man tries to push a vehicle that, along with dozens of others, got stuck on Route 347 in Lake Grove early yesterday morning.

NEWSDAY PHOTO / JOHN PARASKEVAS

help is on the way."

It was not, though DeMartino said he saw municipal trucks drive past.

About 9 a.m. yesterday, he left the relative comfort of the Chrysler and hitched a ride from a stranger. The local streets hadn't yet been plowed, DeMartino said, so he hiked the last half-mile.

The snow was so deep it took 45 minutes. "My heart was pounding out of my chest," he said.

Stranded after helping

Truck driver Saineba Ceasay stopped his big rig on the LIE to help stranded cars and ended up stranded himself, marooned between exits 68 and 69 until late yesterday afternoon.

"Oh, boy, now — 23, 24, 25 — it's been 26 hours," a Zen-sounding Ceasay said about 4 p.m. yesterday.

The native of the West African nation of The Gambia, who now lives in Queens, was hauling mail between Bethpage and Riverhead. A veteran trucker, he had come prepared for a long haul, with homemade fried salmon, spinach salad, Italian dressing and water.

But not that long a haul. By hour 26, about 4:15 p.m., he was lamenting during a phone interview that his food supply would run out when he got another call.

"I gotta go," he said. "My tow truck is calling me!"

With Bill Bleyer and Deon J. Hampton



Truck driver Saineba Ceasay was stranded for hours on the LIE between exits 68 and 69 after 2 p.m. on Friday.

PHOTO BY JOHN ROCA

HOW LI FARED

Snowfall
totals
across
the region



PHOTO BY DANIELLE FINKELSTEIN

BAYVILLE

Brooke Lorenzo, 4, plays near her grandmother's home.

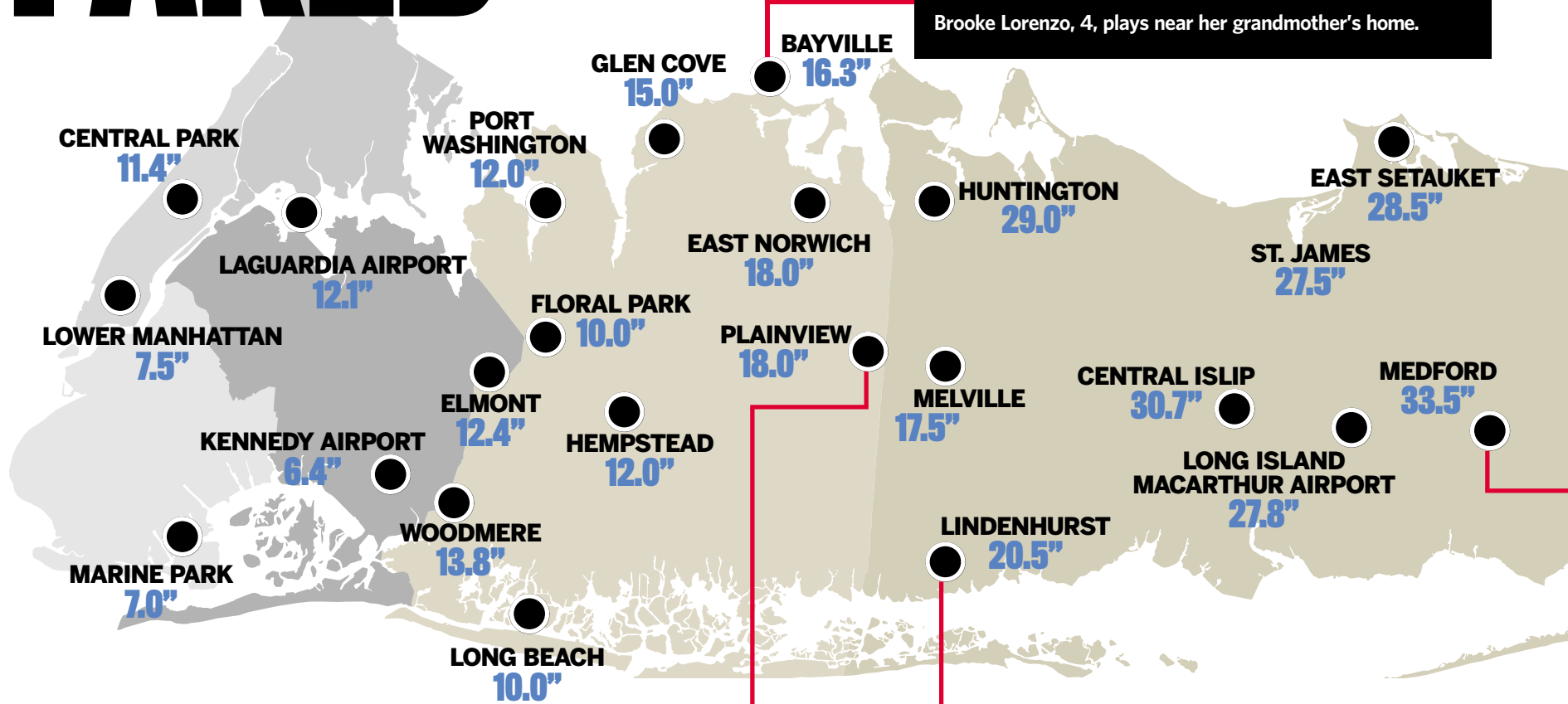


PHOTO BY BARRY SLOAN

PLAINVIEW

Wayne Greenberg blows snow from his Library Lane home.



PHOTO BY JESSICA ROTKIEWICZ

LINDENHURST

Jesse Silverman shovels out his home on Evergreen Drive.



PHOTO BY RANDEE DADONNA

JAMESPORT

A snowman on Route 25 welcomes the public into Jamesport.

BAITING HOLLOW
26.0"

JAMESPORT
14.0"

MATTITUCK
12.9"

BROOKHAVEN
NATIONAL LAB
30.9"
ALL-TIME RECORD

RIVERHEAD
19.4"

SOUTHAMPTON
12.5"

EAST HAMPTON
12.0"

MASTIC
27.5"

SOURCES: NATIONAL
WEATHER SERVICE,
WEATHER UNDERGROUND



PHOTO BY JIM STAUBITZER

MEDFORD

Route 112 was blanketed in white. Medford recorded the Island's top total.



EAST HAMPTON

A bucket loader clears Main Street.

Your best shots



Scenes from the storm:
How Newsday readers captured the Blizzard of '13.

Send us your snow photos and videos.
newsday.com



 Dominick Chiuchiolo's front yard as the storm blew in on Friday.

Photo by Dominick Chiuchiolo of Manorville



 Madison Hahn enjoys the aftermath of the blizzard with her new snow friend in Holbrook.

Photo by Nicole Hahn of Holbrook

Eight-month-old Michael James Sica enjoys his first snow. 

Photo by his mother, Christine Abbate of Seaford



 Little Petesy is a neighborhood cat that loves Dianna D'Amico's doorstep even in the snow yesterday.

Photo by Dianna D'Amico of Central Islip

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Airports & transit

AIRPORTS

- Kennedy and LaGuardia airports reopened yesterday.
- Flights were to resume this morning at Long Island MacArthur Airport.

TRANSIT

- The LIRR was expected to return to a weekend schedule today.
- Nassau's NICE Bus service is operating normally.
- Suffolk County Transit service was suspended yesterday. Normal operations were expected to resume tomorrow.
- Amtrak service to Boston was partially restored yesterday.



LIRR passengers exit at Port Jefferson as snow picks up Friday.

PHOTO BY JOSEPH D. SULLIVAN

Schools

Representatives of Long Island's three regional BOCES said they will not know until today whether schools will reopen on schedule tomorrow.

Power

ELECTRIC

Outages should be reported by calling 800-490-0075, online at <https://www.liaccount.com/outage/Report> or by texting OUT to 695472.

GAS

Gas leaks should be reported to National Grid by calling 800-490-0045.

Shoveling snow tips

- Clear the snow every few inches instead of waiting for the snow to stop falling before you head outdoors.
- Wear breathable layers. Avoid heavy wools, man-made materials or other materials that don't allow perspiration to evaporate.
- Push, don't lift. If you push the snow to the side rather than trying to lift the snow to remove it, you exert less energy thereby placing less stress on your body.
- Take frequent breaks and stay hydrated.
- Pay attention to your surroundings. When shoveling snow near streets, be aware that vehicles may not have good traction in the snow and ice.



A St. James resident shovels out his driveway yesterday.

PHOTO BY STEVE PROST

Local contacts

NASSAU

North Hempstead:

Call 311 or 516-TOWN-311 for a service representative or go to northhempstead.com.

Hempstead: Call 516-489-5000 or visit townofhempstead.org.

Oyster Bay: Go to oysterbaytown.com or call highway department to report downed trees at 516-677-5757.

City of Glen Cove: Go to glencove-li.us or call the Department of Public Works at 516-676-4402.

City of Long Beach: Visit longbeachny.org or call city hall at 516-431-1000.

SUFFOLK

Babylon: Visit townofbabylon.com or call the public safety department at 631-422-7600 to report downed trees.

Brookhaven: Call the highway department at 631-451-9200 to report downed trees or visit brookhaven.org.

East Hampton: Go to town.east-hampton.ny.us or call the highway department to report roadway obstructions at 631-324-0925.

Huntington: Visit huntingtonny.gov or call its 24-hour emergency number, 631-271-6573, or for downed trees, 631-499-0444.

Islip: Visit townofislipny.gov or call 631-224-5600 to report downed trees or power lines.

Riverhead: Call the storm hotline at 631-727-3200 or visit townofriverheadny.gov.

Smithtown: Call the Public Safety Department at 631-360-7553.

Southampton: Go to southamptontownny.gov or call 631-283-6000.

Southold: Visit southoldtownny.gov or call 631-765-1800.

Shelter Island: Visit shelterislandtown.us or call 631-749-0291.

LIRR PLANS NORMAL SCHEDULE

BY ALFONSO A. CASTILLO

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The Long Island Rail Road planned to resume normal weekend service today throughout most of its system, having largely dug out of the blizzard that forced the agency to curtail most of its operations yesterday.

Service will be back to normal today everywhere except east of Ronkonkoma, east of Babylon and east of Huntington. That includes the Far Rockaway, Long Beach, Hempstead and Oyster Bay branches, which were all suspended through most of yesterday.

“Until service is fully restored, our crews will continue working around the clock clearing snow and ice from the tracks, clearing yards, inspecting signals, train equipment, switches and grade crossings,” LIRR president Helena Williams said. “The biggest tasks right now are removing snow and clearing ice from the third rail.”

With 700 miles of track covered in snow, the LIRR made its so-called “big four” — the Babylon, Ronkonkoma, Port Washington and Port Jefferson lines — its top priority yesterday. Trains ran about every two hours on those lines, as 1,200 employees worked around the clock to clear the rails. “We’ve got to kind of concentrate the available resources on those primary branches,” LIRR customer service vice president Joe Calderone said.

Service remained suspended on the Far Rockaway, Hempstead, Long Beach and Oyster Bay branches as well as the Montauk branch east of Speonk, the Port Jefferson branch east of Huntington and the Ronkonkoma branch east of Farmingdale.

Calderone said the railroad benefited from the worst of the storm arriving after most of its commuters had reached home Friday evening because the LIRR had added extra afternoon trains. He said ridership yesterday was “definitely light.” And with few customers or trains, crews should be able to restore most service by tomorrow, he said.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority reported scattered delays throughout the rest of its system. Suffolk County Transit suspended all buses yesterday, and expects to resume service tomorrow. Nassau's NICE Bus operated a normal schedule yesterday with some scattered delays and detours, especially on North Shore roads.