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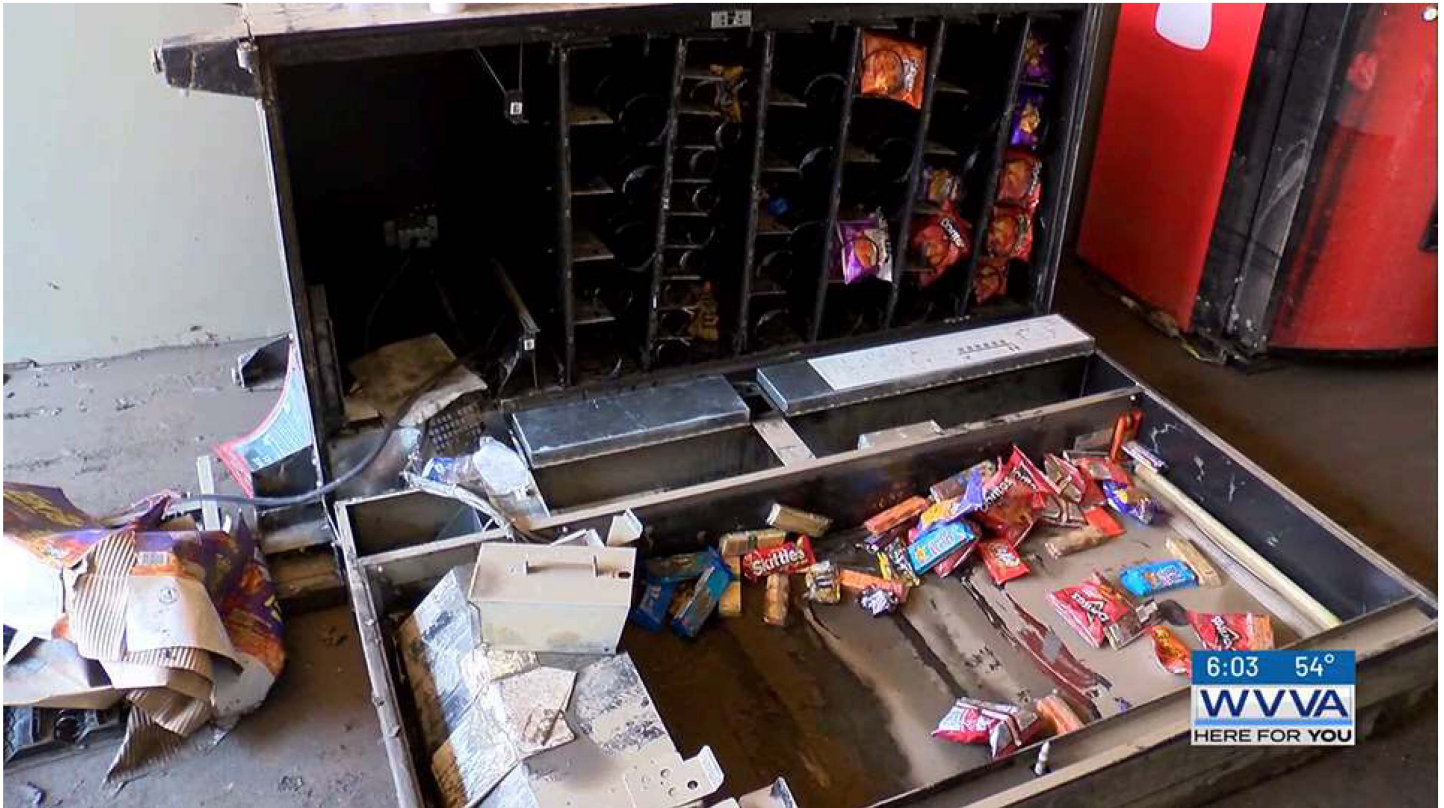
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## Welch business owner 'devastated' after flooding forces closure

"... literally watching everything I love just filling up with water and there's nothing I can do about it, it's just devastating," says the owner of 'The Fortress'.



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By [Clayton McChesney](#)

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WELCH, W. Va. (WVVA) -Along with many homes devastated by the floods in February, local businesses were impacted as



"...rain was just getting worse and worse, so I was like, 'we're going to have to pack up and go.' We packed up, I watched the water go over the floodwall and then, as it started rising, my dad and I pulled down as far as we could, and we just... I was able to see it on our cameras upstairs... we could just watch the water, and as it rose, all of everything we had down here just started floating, and I just had to stop watching because it was just... too difficult to watch," says Pace.

## ADVERTISEMENT

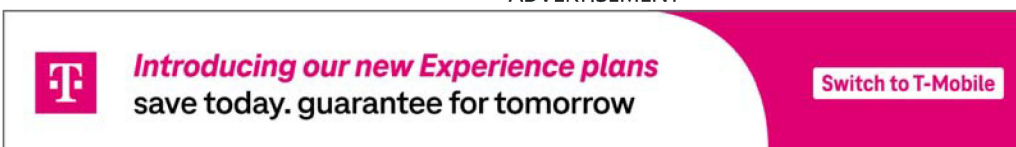
With the building's location near the river, Pace says they took the brunt of the flood. The building filled with around six feet of water, destroying everything on the first floor, like bounce houses, batting cages, and snack machines.

All this coming less than two years since the Fortress first opened.

"...Just the thought of watching it filling up with water and there was nothing I could do, and then, we also had buildings across the street that are ministry buildings, so just literally watching everything I love just filling up with water and there's nothing I can do about it, it's just devastating. I mean, devastating is the only word that I can think of, and I went through Katrina in Mississippi, so that says a lot," says Pace.

The small business was forced to close in what would have been its busy season, already losing seven reservations since the flooding began. And with no money and their flood insurance lapsing on the building in January, just a month before the flood, its future is uncertain.

## ADVERTISEMENT

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"Our kids are already messaging me, and like, 'Ms. Pace, what are we going to do? When are we going to reopen? When can I come and play? I've had people from out of state, you know, that are coming in, that don't know that we've been flooded, trying to book appointments, and I'm having to explain to them, you know, I don't know when we'll be open..." says Pace.

Pace says this loss of another small business and one of the few recreational options in the area is a big hit on a community already going through a difficult time.

Place thanks those who offered assistance in their time of need. If you would like to help this small business, Pace says they need extra hands to restore the Fortress, as well as building supplies, and prayer.

You can get in contact with them on [their website](#).

