



SUNNY & WARM

Santa Rosa
High: 86 Low: 50
Rohnert Park
High: 85 Low: 49
Sonoma
High: 87 Low: 51
Details, Page B6

The Press

DEMOCRAT

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2005 • SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA



Kielty KO's Angels

A's win on homer in 11th inning, stretch division lead to 2 games / C1

SR may penalize water wasters

Rate plan would charge premiums for major summer usage / B1

HURRICANE KATRINA

New Orleans in chaos

80% OF CITY FLOODED AS LEVEES BREAK; TOTAL EVACUATION ORDERED; DEATH TOLL JUMPS



By **JOSEPH B. TREASTER**
and **N.R. KLEINFELD**
NEW YORK TIMES

NEW ORLEANS — A day after New Orleans thought it narrowly escaped the worst of Hurricane Katrina's wrath, water broke through two levees Tuesday and virtually submerged and isolated the city, causing incalculable destruction and rendering it uninhabitable for weeks.

With bridges washed out, highways converted into canals and power and communications lines left inoperable, government officials ordered out everyone left in the city. They said that within two days they will evacuate the Superdome, where about 15,000 refugees huddled in increasingly grim conditions, running out of water and food and with rising waters threatening the generators.

"The devastation is greater than our worst fears," Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco said. "It's just totally overwhelming."

So dire was the situation that the Pentagon ordered five Navy ships and eight Navy maritime rescue teams to the Gulf Coast to bolster relief operations. It also planned to fly in Swift boat rescue teams from California.

With the rising waters and widespread devastation hobbling rescue and recovery efforts, authorities could only guess at the death toll in the city and across the Gulf Coast. Mississippi officials raised the official count of the dead to at least 100 in Harrison County, home to Biloxi

TURN TO **KATRINA**, PAGE A11

INSIDE

LOOTING BREAKS OUT
Police helpless to stop lawlessness in New Orleans / A3

LOCAL AID EFFORT
50 Sonoma County Red Cross volunteers head to Gulf Coast / A5

GAS PRICES
Oil hits new high as damage assessed / E1

Desperation rises along with water level

By **PETER WHORISKEY**
and **SAM COATES**
WASHINGTON POST

NEW ORLEANS — This exodus was even more desperate than the first.

As murky water surged around their homes from levee breaks undetected in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, families that had hunkered down for Monday's storm were forced Tuesday to climb first to their attics and then to their roofs in the hope of rescue by boat or helicopter.

In the streets, cars filled with fleeing residents — pet cages and luggage in tow — stalled in chest-deep water. Scores of people could be seen trudging west on foot along deserted Interstate 10, lugging small packages of belongings, headed for refuge from the water that now covers 80 percent of this city.

"I have nothing but me, the children, and what we have on our backs," said Molly Moses, a mother of five who was rescued from the roof of her two-story house four miles from the center of New Orleans.

TURN TO **FLOOD**, PAGE A11

Water covers roads and surrounds homes off Interstate 10 in New Orleans on Tuesday. Officials estimated 80 percent of the below-sea-level city was under water.

THE LATEST

DEATHS: Mississippi reports at least 100 dead, many when a Biloxi apartment complex washed away. At right, Biloxi firefighters remove a body. Louisiana officials fear a high death count.

NEW ORLEANS: Flooding worsens as two levees break. Thousands are rescued. Looting spreads. The sweltering city is without drinkable water, and the electricity could be out for weeks.

WORST EVER? Revised estimates put damage to more than \$25 billion, which would make Katrina the costliest hurricane in U.S. history.

STRANDED: Federal officials warn structural damage to homes, diseases from animal carcasses and toxic chemicals in floodwaters make it unsafe for New Orleans residents to return home anytime soon.



PATRICK SCHNEIDER / Charlotte Observer

Rescuers ignore dead to save the living

With thousands stranded in New Orleans, massive relief effort mobilized

By **RALPH BLUMENTHAL**
NEW YORK TIMES

NEW ORLEANS — "If we come across a body floating?" Sgt. Chris Fisher of the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office asked.

"Let it go," Maj. Bobby Woods

replied, as Fisher and other rescue workers prepared for the day's mission. "Let's first go for life."

With thousands of New Orleans residents stranded on upper floors and roofs by rising floodwater from Hurricane Katrina, rescue teams from across the country mobilized in the gulf area in the largest U.S. relief effort since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

They sailed the seas over In-

terstate 10 and other submerged arteries, plucking people to safety with an arsenal of lifesaving equipment.

The people who were saved emerged with anguished testimony of the human toll.

A 95-year-old invalid drowned in her house after her daughter said she could not carry her to safety.

"I had to give her mouth-to-mouth," the daughter, Judy Mar-

TURN TO **RESCUE**, PAGE A11

INSIDE



FACES OF POVERTY

Number of families and individuals living below poverty line drops in Sonoma County, but advocates say numbers don't tell whole story. B1

Business	E1	Editorial	B4	Sports	C1
Classified	F1	Lotto	A2	Theaters	D10
Comics	D13	Obituaries	B2	TV	D12
Crossword	D11	Opinion	B5	Weather	B6

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