

Katrina's wake: Death, despair

Officials believe some bodies may never be found

Knight Ridder Newspapers

NEW ORLEANS — The second day brought more horror, greater despair: The death toll exceeded 100 — in just one Mississippi county. Rescuers acrobatically plucked thousands from the crests of roofs. Levees failed, and panic flared and spread.

New, terrifying floods swept through the heart of New Orleans. Water swamped 80 percent of the city. And yet fires raged, fed by leaking gas.

Medics transformed part of the Superdome into a triage center, but water lapped at the edges of the arena. Looters roamed. Martial law was declared and the governor worked on plans to shut New Orleans — a place very close to ruin — and remove everyone still there.

"We've lost our city," said Marc Morial, a former mayor of New Orleans, now serving as president of the National Urban League. "I fear it's potentially like Pompeii."

The awful panorama of Hurricane Katrina's devastation stretched across four coastal states, and a rag-tag, numbered army of refugees searched desperately for the bare necessities of life — water, food, shelter and, to escape from it all, gasoline.

"There's nowhere, nowhere to go," said Robert Smith, a truck driver who fled New Orleans with his family of six and ended up stranded on Interstate 10 near Gulfport, Miss. "There's nowhere to eat, get gas or stay."

Water surrounded the road, and it was getting deeper. Closer to New Orleans, over Lake Pontchartrain, the highway lay crumbled, ruined.

Rubble and bodies

Unprecedented destruction on the Mississippi coast and elsewhere will prompt "the largest Red Cross response in the history of the nation," national Red Cross spokesman



Dustin Duvall is hugged by his mother, Elizabeth Duvall, after the two were reunited outside the destroyed remains of their neighborhood in East Biloxi, Miss., Tuesday morning.

PATRICK SCHNEIDER Knight Ridder Newspapers

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Peter Teahen said.

Hundreds are feared dead, said Biloxi spokesman Vincent Creel.

"It's going to be much higher than anything we've ever seen," said Jim Pollard, spokesman for the Harrison County Emergency Management Agency.

Public officials were skittish about relaying fatality numbers because firefighters, other emergency workers and even volunteers navigated mountains of debris Tuesday, finding bodies all along the waterfront.

The hardest hit areas appeared to be the peninsula in East Biloxi, a four-block stretch of the waterfront in Long Beach and low-lying areas of Henderson Point on the west side of Pass Christian.

Rubble was so thick and high that some areas were inaccessible.

In East Biloxi, firefighters and emergency workers pulled bodies from the debris, mostly in areas inaccessible to sightseers. The firefighters tucked the bodies into black bags, laid them on the ground and resumed their search.

Officials were still concentrating on search and rescue missions Tuesday afternoon, looking for survivors that might have been trapped in debris. As many as 100 rescue vehicles were expected to fill the parking lot at the

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Go to www.ledger-enquirer.com for the latest on Katrina's aftermath and to see pages from the Biloxi Sun Herald.

Evacuees seek local shelter

Staff reports

Grail Howard was going to be catering a wedding this Saturday in New Orleans.

"If the wedding goes on," she said, "It looks like it'll have to do so without me."

As she spoke Tuesday, she and her husband, John, were eating hamburgers in the gymnasium at Hilton Terrace Baptist Church on Warm Springs Road. It's now the location of an American Red Cross shelter in Columbus for victims of Hurricane Katrina.

Soon, they might be sleeping there as well, along with their son, 26-year-old Glenn, and 16-year-old daughter, Nashea.

"We got a hotel room," said John Howard, "but we thought it'd be for a couple of days.

PLANNING TO HELP?

If you're teaming up with your church, neighbors or another group to help storm victims, we'd like to know about it. Give us a call at 571-8565.

Now, who knows? It could run into a lot of money."

"Some people might be with us for weeks," said Hilton Terrace pastor Kevin Calhoun. "That's OK. I can't imagine what some of these people are going through."

It took the Howards 18 hours to drive here,

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A note from the editor

The Biloxi Sun Herald, hometown newspaper for the hurricane-devastated community along Mississippi's Gulf Coast, has been produced and printed for the past two days at the Ledger-Enquirer building in downtown Columbus.

Working with our friends and colleagues from our sister Knight Ridder paper has been a bittersweet labor of love, as we've worked side by side next to the folks from Biloxi. But afterward, we've gone home to our loved ones and secure homes. They've returned to local hotel rooms, generally with spouses and kids holed up there as well, waiting and hoping.

We invite Biloxi-area residents who have sought refuge in our community to stop by our offices at 17 W. 12th St. to pick up copies of the Sun Herald.

We hope you'll understand that we printed



the Ledger-Enquirer a little earlier last night, and will likely do so throughout the week. We'll lose some late sports results (see www.ledger-enquirer.com) and lottery drawings. But we believe that's a small price to pay to deliver papers to the people of south Mississippi. They are all in our prayers.

Ben Holden,
Executive Editor

IF YOU WANT TO HELP

- American Red Cross (www.redcross.org/) (800) 435-7669 or (800) HELP-NOW
- America's Second Harvest (www.secondharvest.org/) for hunger relief. (800) 344-8070
- Catholic Charities (www.catholiccharitiesusa.org/) (800) 919-9338
- Church World Services (www.churchworldservice.org/) (800) 297-1516
- Network for Good (www.networkforgood.org) provides easy access for donations to a number of charities.
- Salvation Army: www.salvationarmyusa.org/

MORE INSIDE



MATT ROURKE Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS FLOODED

Many in the city thought they had dodged a bullet; they were wrong

STORY, A8

Gas prices begin climb

Spiral has locals bargain-hunting

BUSINESS, C7

TO DO TODAY Wet catfish

We've never seen a catfish not at home in the water, so maybe tonight's freebie at the Columbus Catfish baseball game — a bottle of water to the first 250 fans — is more than appropriate.

Tonight the team continues a series against the Augusta GreenJackets at 6 p.m. The game is at Golden Park, 100 Fourth St., and tickets range from \$4 to \$7. Details: (706) 571-8866.

INSIDE

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LEGALS	B7	TELEVISION	E5

Today's Forecast

Partly cloudy, chance of showers and t-storms. High: 90. Overnight low: 70.

WEATHER, B8

