



# The Tuscaloosa News

TUSCALOOSA, NORTHPORT, WEST ALABAMA

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## HURRICANE AFTERMATH IN NEW ORLEANS

# MORE THAN 25,000 STRANDED

## More evacuees on their way here

By Katie Porterfield  
Staff Writer

TUSCALOOSA | Although it's almost impossible to pinpoint exactly how many Hurricane Katrina evacuees will stop in Tuscaloosa, local officials know one thing for sure — more are coming.

"I just got off the phone with the welcome center on the state line [in Sumter County], and they're still coming," said Robert Ratliff, executive director of the Tuscaloosa Convention and Visitors Bureau.

As of Thursday, there were about 500 evacuees in the Red Cross shelter at the University of Alabama Recreation Center. Director of the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel Lee Sentell, said the bureau surveyed hotels throughout the state Thursday to determine pockets of vacancies. Of Tuscaloosa's 2,057 rooms, 1,140 are being rented to evacuees. At the time of the survey, there were only 14 rooms left.

"We would presume more [are coming], because they've got to go somewhere. And we're on [Interstate] 20/59, a major corridor," said Tuscaloosa County Emergency Management Agency Director SEE SHELTER | 6A

### HOW TO HELP

All faith-based hurricane volunteers should call William Scroggins, director of the Tuscaloosa Prayer Network, to find out what services are needed and where. Call 758-0458.



**INSIDE:** ■ Mississippi: Autopsies must be done in parking lots | Page 4A  
■ List of local hurricane relief services | Page 3B ■ Sense of helplessness hangs over city | Page 7A ■ Storm overwhelmed preparations | Page 9A

## Victims growing hostile as they wait

By Allen G. Breed  
The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS | New Orleans descended into anarchy Thursday as corpses lay abandoned in street medians, fights and fires broke out, cops turned in their badges and the governor declared war on looters who have made the city a menacing landscape of disorder and fear.

"They have M-16s and they're locked and loaded," Gov. Kathleen Blanco said of 300 National Guard troops who landed in New Orleans fresh from duty in Iraq. "These troops know how to shoot and kill, and they are more than willing to do so, and I expect they will."

Four days after Hurricane Katrina roared in with a devastating blow that inflicted potentially thousands of deaths, the fear, anger and violence mounted Thursday.

"I'm not sure I'm going to get out of here alive," said Canadian tourist Larry Mitzel, who handed a reporter his business card in case he goes missing. "I'm scared of riots. I'm scared of the locals. We might get caught in the crossfire."

The chaos deepened despite the promise of 1,400 National Guardsmen a day to stop the looting, plans for a \$10 billion recovery bill in Congress and a government relief effort President Bush called the biggest in U.S. history.

SEE VICTIMS | 6A

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Residents wait to be evacuated from the Louisiana Superdome Thursday in New Orleans.**

## Suspect in Holloway case to be released

By Michael Norton  
The Associated Press

ORANJESTAD, ARUBA | A judge on Thursday ordered the conditional release of a Dutch teenager in the disappearance of Natalee Holloway, but he remains a suspect, his defense attorney said.

Joran van der Sloot, 18, could be released from jail as early as Saturday and remain free pending the outcome of the probe, said Antonio Carlo.

The judge's decision "only has to do with the pretrial detention. The primary condition is he has to remain available to police," Carlo said.

Court officials couldn't be reached and the prosecutors office declined to comment, saying it hasn't received the entire order.

"A press release will be sent out only when we have gotten all of the decisions made by the judge of instruction. Most probably this will be tomorrow morning," according to a statement from the prosecutor's office.

Van der Sloot was arrested June 9 along with two friends, Surinamese nationals Satish Kalpoe, 18, and

Deepak Kalpoe, 21, on suspicion of involvement in Holloway's disappearance. All three have denied any connection to the disappearance.

The Kalpoe brothers were released on July 4 but were re-arrested last week.

A judge ordered Satish Kalpoe to remain jailed another eight days, said government spokesman Ruben Trapenberg said, without giving further details.

The judge still was to rule on whether to continue holding or release Deepak Satish. Suspects can be detained for 116 days without charge in the Dutch Caribbean island.

Holloway, of Mountain Brook, was last seen May 30 leaving a bar SEE HOLLOWAY | 11A



**Joran van der Sloot could be released by Saturday.**



**Natalee Holloway has been missing since May 30.**

HOW TO REACH US: 345-0505

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**A good deal of sun**

High 95,  
Low 68

Map and forecast:  
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Dow  
-21.97  
10,459.63



## Rumors, fear causing fuel depletion

By April Wortham  
Staff Writer

TUSCALOOSA | Worried about a gas shortage? The only thing to fear, experts and local fuel suppliers say, could be fear itself.

"People need to stop going out and getting gas if they don't need it, because all they're doing is making it worse," said Todd Turner, operations manager for Friday Oil Co., which supplies gasoline and diesel fuel to Shell stations in Tuscaloosa County.

Rumors of an impending fuel shortage Wednesday as a result of Hurricane Katrina sent people throughout the Southeast racing to the pumps, where they were filling not only their vehicle tanks, but boats and any available container that could hold gasoline.

Turner said the brief panic emptied or severely depleted



STAFF PHOTO | JASON GETZ

**Duke Boutwell of Laurel, Miss., fills up one of two 55-gallon drums in the back of his Chevrolet truck at an Exxon station in Tuscaloosa Thursday afternoon. Boutwell filled up the first drum for \$159.**

tanks at some stations around Tuscaloosa. An underground diesel tank at the Shell station on Highway 11 that he filled at 8 p.m. Wednesday was empty by

Thursday afternoon, something Turner said normally takes three days.

"We can't get the product in SEE SHORTAGE | 6A

## State looking into claims of price gouging

By Dana Beyerle  
Montgomery Bureau Chief

MONTGOMERY | Attorney General Troy King said Thursday he's reviewing complaints of gasoline price gouging, but that he wasn't ready to interpret price hikes of as much as 50 cents per gallon as actual gouging.

"We've gotten hundreds of complaints on the price of gasoline, and I'm asking the same questions that all Alabamians are asking about why the increases, to what do we attribute them?" he said. "I haven't got enough information."

When Gov. Bob Riley declared a state of emergency because of Hurricane Katrina, the anti-gouging law kicked in statewide, said attorney general spokesman Chris Bence. SEE GOUGING | 11A



STAFF PHOTO | JASON GETZ

**The cost of unleaded gasoline jumped as much as 40 cents on Wednesday. A BP station in Tuscaloosa sells regular for \$2.99 a gallon.**