KATRINA: THE STORM WE’VE ALWAYS FEARED

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30 CENTS

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HURRICANE EDITION

CATASTROPHE

STORM SURGE SWAMPS 9TH WARD, ST. BERNARD

LAKEVIEW LEVEE BREACH THREATENS TO INUNDATE CITY

By Bruce Nolan

Hurricanes Katrina struck metropolitan New Orleans on Monday with a staggering blow, far surpassing Hurricane Betsy, the landmark disaster of an earlier generation. The storm flooded huge swaths of the city, dislocating hundreds of thousands of people and animals. The next had to take more of its floodwaters than any other before it, its main thoroughfares.

The people who survived it told the same story, written on their stunned and shivering faces. They are the Katrina generation.

After the mighty storm came the rising water

By Doug MacCash

A large section of the vital 17th Street Canal levee, where it connects to the brand new “hurricane proof” Old River, finally gave way late Monday morning in Bucktown after Katrina’s fiercest winds were well north. The breach sent a churning sea of water roll-ton, Gentilly, City Park and neighborhoods farther south and east.

STAFF PHOTO BY ALEX BRANDON

SOUTHWIND: The damage to the Hunt Region on Poydras Street shows that vertical evacuation is no solution to the dangers of a Category 4 hurricane. See story, A-15

INSIDE

Flooding wipes out two communities

By Brian Trainor

As Jerry Rayes piloted his boat down St. Claude Avenue, just past the Industrial Canal, the sort of scene that could barely be heard from the road grew louder as, one by one, faces of desperate families appeared on rooftops, on balconies and in windows, some of them waving white flags.

Residents in the Lower Ninth Ward and elsewhere were suddenly facing the same problems as a Katrina survivor 40 years ago. But this time, the flooding was much worse.

The people Rayes rescued all told the same story, written on their stunned and shivering faces. They are the Katrina generation.

INSIDE

Residents’ insurance claims were set to resolve, A-14 – Leaders in the city struggle on, fast and far, A-19 – Latest storm coverage @ nola.com

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We lost everything: cars, art, furniture, everything.

BREACH, (from A.)

The lake. Nobody knew the cause of the fire because nobody could get anywhere near it to find out what happened. Adverse residents evacuated to the dry land of the Filmore Street bridge over the Marzano Canal were stranded between the flooded neighborhoods on their right, and the flooded City Park on their left, because the levee breaches were not plugged. One of the breaches was on the levee as the harbor. There were stacked on top of each other like cordwood in the municipal marina and yacht harbor. The Robert E. Lee shopping center was under 7 feet of water. Plantation Coffeehouse on Canal Boulevard was the same. By the Elementary School had 8 feet of water inside.

Indeed, the entire business district along Broadway was dome to the ruins in many places. People were being saved from the levee breach by still-strong containment from Katrina.

They struggled to elevate furniture and eventually found themselves forced to the refuge of second-story windows. They were able to say how long it would take to plug the hole, or how much water would get through it before that happened.

In Lakeview, the scene was surreal. A woman replied to a message from a rooftop, asking them to call her father and tell him she was fine. Gruber said, "I saw my Jeep was under water." The water had risen knee-deep during the storm, but despite the clearing skies, it continued to move at least 10 feet per minute, according to Kyle Scott, continuing its agony. The lake will never be the same, people say, and the air raid siren will never be heard again.

While trying to plug the levee breach, by still-strong containment from Katrina.

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"I never thought I would see anything like this," Scott said, "but this was the greatest storm I have ever seen." The water was over the levee breach by still-strong containment from Katrina.

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At sunset, Monday, the storming out Coast Guard station was silhouetted against the approaching remnants of the Southern Air-raid warning. Firefighters deliver residents they had rescued to the levee near the corner of Orleans and Filmore avenues.