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HURRICANE EDITION

KATRINA: THE STORM WE'VE ALWAYS FEARED

Some return to Plaquemines; death toll in Louisiana at 197

KATRINA EVENTS

- ▶ Nearly half of Plaquemines Parish's 27,000 residents allowed to return home.
- ▶ The official death toll climbs to 197.
- ▶ State Homeland Security director says FEMA too slow in finding temporary housing for 500,000 displaced storm victims.
- ▶ President Bush makes his third visit to the storm-ravaged Gulf Coast, sleeping aboard the USS Iwo Jima docked in New Orleans.
- ▶ New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin grilled for failing to order mandatory evacuation before the storm.
- ▶ Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport reopens to cargo flights.
- ▶ New York City firefighters and hundreds of others from across the country take a break from hurricane relief to hold 9-11 commemoration.



STAFF PHOTO BY TED JACKSON

New York firefighters Kevin Bourke and Steve Marley, surrounded by their brethren from New York and New Orleans, hug after a Mass at Our Lady of Holy Cross in Algiers. On the fourth anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the service honored both cities and the losses they have endured. **See story, A-2**

Superdome laid waste by those it sheltered

By Jeff Duncan
Staff writer

The concrete and steel titan on Poydras Street still dominates the New Orleans skyline. But the Superdome, like everything else in the brutalized city, looks much different now. Hurricane Katrina's 100 mph-plus winds relentlessly strafed the world-renowned stadium's roof, peeled back its white weather-protective shell like a coconut husk. The force was so powerful it stripped off sheets of 2-inch foam and thick rubber and blew them all over the Central Business District. Three huge smoke dampers were blown from the roof. Seven other gaping holes were opened.

Once compared to a sleek futuristic spaceship, the Dome now looks like a

See **SUPERDOME**, page A-5



STAFF PHOTO BY MICHAEL DeMOCKER

Clad in anti-contamination suits, crews examine the sewage and garbage in a women's restroom in the Superdome.

Nagin criticized over evacuation

By Ron Thibodeaux
Staff writer

For those who gauge the still-unfolding drama of Hurricane Katrina's aftermath in sound bites and photo ops, Sunday did not disappoint as President Bush returned to the region and New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin caught flak before a national television audience for the city's performance

in the face of the storm.

In Plaquemines Parish, the reality of what Katrina wrought played out far from the spotlight but with no less poignancy. Sunday was the first day that almost half of the parish's 27,000 residents could return to their homes after a two-week evacuation.

While officials in some other hard-hit parishes want their people to stay away until public services are fully restored,

Plaquemines Parish President Benny Rousselle invited residents to return where they could.

Many got right to work assessing the damage, making repairs and starting to upright their overturned lives, and the sounds of traffic on Belle Chasse Highway and the whine of saws and the pounding of hammers on rooftops in neighbor-

See **KATRINA**, page A-4

Faith, not power, restored to Saints fans

By Steve Ritea
Staff writer

The battered portable radio sat on the bar, its antenna resting on a Bud Light tap and Sunday's Saints game crackling over a steady undercurrent of static as the crowd at Johnny White's Sports Bar swatted away flies and beat back beads of sweat forming on

their foreheads with cold long-necks.

Steve Bartley refused to get his hopes up, seeking to minimize the pain if New Orleans' NFL team lost its season opener to the rival Carolina Panthers at a time when the suffering city so badly needed a win.

"Typical Saints," he grimaced after a goosed play, nursing his beer as a military

helicopter chopped through the skies over the French Quarter.

Whatever it was Sunday — luck, extra determination by the team, or a higher power offering the Big Easy a ray of hope at its darkest hour — the Saints had Bartley on his feet, cheering and high-fiving when the team pulled out a 47-yard field goal in the final seconds to

See **FAITH**, page A-3



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