

# Memories From Fran Still Fresh

Hurricane Fran bombarded the UNC campus in 1996 and left Chapel Hill in a state of emergency.

By ANNE DAHLGREN AND KATY NELSON  
Staff Writers

Senior Ana Zalacain can still envision the uprooted trees and scattered debris that covered Ehringhaus field during Hurricane Fran in 1996.

History Professor William Barney remembers the sky being a sickening yellow-green when an oak tree crashed into his bedroom.

With Hurricane Floyd on the horizon, memories of Hurricane Fran are resurfacing among students and faculty on campus.

Fran hit the N.C. coast at about 8:15 p.m. on Sept. 5, 1996. Three hours later, Mayor Rosemary Waldorf declared Chapel Hill in a state of emergency, which lasted for 4 1/2 days and led former Chancellor Michael Hooker to cancel classes Friday, Sept. 6.

Students awoke that Friday morning to blocked roadways and power outages, just some of the aftershocks that hit campus after the 79 mph winds came through the night before.

Seniors have vivid recollections of the disaster, which many said was a hallmark event of their freshman year.

"Trees were everywhere — through the baseball field by Ehringhaus and on the first quad," said Zalacain, a student and journalism major from South Orange, N.J.

It took Barney more than a year before his life returned to normal after the 55- to 60-ton tree crashed into his home.

The tree stopped one to two feet above his bed, causing such extensive damage that he and his wife were forced to move out of their home for a year and five days.

"The next morning someone said our bedroom looked like a bomb had gone off," Barney said.

Others described a similar scene on



DTH FILE PHOTO

Children play on fallen trees in McCorkle Place after Hurricane Fran hit the campus in September 1996.

campus.

"Late Thursday night it really was like all hell was breaking loose," said senior Adam Smith, a journalism major from Mebane.

"You could hear trees going down and transformers blowing (Thursday evening). We were lucky no trees fell on our house because there were trees on houses all around us," said Tom Nixon, a reference librarian in Davis Library.

"After Fran had passed at 7 a.m. Friday, there was no traffic on University Drive in Durham, which is very unusual."

On campus, residence halls experienced brief power outages. However, Odum Village and off-campus housing lost power for lengthy periods of time.

History Professor Leon Fink said the disaster caused Chapel Hill and Carrboro to be "eerily quiet, as if we'd

been plunged back into the time before Edison."

Classes resumed Monday, Sept. 9, but were once again canceled from noon until 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 11, for a campuswide cleanup.

The relief effort was the idea of former Student Body President Aaron Nelson. More than 1,000 students participated in the first hour alone, cleaning areas by the Old Well and the Coker Arboretum.

The dining halls remained open all weekend, and hot showers were available at Fetzer and Wollen Gyms to aid students and faculty.

Smith said, "I don't think the University could've handled the situation any better."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

# Hurricanes Old Hat for N.C.

By KIMBERLY GRABNER AND LANI HARAC  
Staff Writers

Residents tracking Hurricane Floyd's progress toward the Carolina coast say they can't help but feel a sense of déjà vu.

The Carolinas are certainly no strangers to the wrath of hurricanes, especially during September, the height of the traditional season for the monstrous storms.

More than 300 hurricanes and tropical storms have hit the U.S. East Coast during September, more than any other month, since records began in 1886.

Hurricanes from a Category 4 storm to August's Category 2 weakling, Dennis, have pummeled North Carolina in the past decade.

Hurricane Bertha, which hit in July 1996, caused about \$250 million in damage.

And Hurricane Bonnie, a Category 3 storm that struck Wilmington in August 1998, left three North Carolina residents dead and \$1 billion in damage.

Hurricane Hugo, a Category 4 storm like Floyd, killed 86 people when it struck North and South Carolina in September 1989.

It also caused more than \$9 billion in damage, \$7.1 billion in the Carolinas alone, according to a National Climatic Data Center Web site.

Prior to making landfall in Charleston, S.C., the hurricane scattered residents to storm shelters and outside cities.

Those left behind watched as Hugo wreaked havoc around them.

## How Hurricanes Blow

Hurricanes are the largest incarnations of Mother Nature's force, with powers destructive enough to raze cities. But the feared storms can also be just really big, bad rainy days.

■ **Category 1** hurricanes maintain winds up to 95 mph, with storm surges up to 5 feet and minimal damage.

■ **Category 2** hurricanes are fiercer, with winds up to 110 mph and storm surges of up to 8 feet. Their damage is moderate. Hurricane Dennis is the most recent Category 2 storm to strike North Carolina.

■ **Category 3** hurricanes bring winds up to 130 mph and storm surges of up to 12 feet. They cause extensive damage. Hurricane Fran was a Category 3 hurricane.

■ **Category 4** hurricanes have the power to level houses and dig up the strongest trees. They blow winds of up to 155 mph and can cause extreme damage. 1996's Hurricane Hugo carried Category 4 winds.

■ **Category 5** hurricanes are the most powerful and destructive storms, with winds topping 160 mph and catastrophic damage capabilities.

Janet Tye, a junior nutrition major at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, was a fifth-grader in Charleston when the storm hit.

"All I could see outside were trees going back and forth," she said.

"I thought our house was going to collapse or something."

Her family had to clean up fallen trees as well as shingles blown from the roof.

They also had to rescreen their porch and buy a new doghouse.

"It's expensive (to replace everything) because all the prices go up after the hurricane since it's all in such demand," Tye said.

She was out of school for about 2 1/2 weeks, compared to just one week for Charlotte-Mecklenburg County students.

Amie Keeling, a UNC junior from Charlotte, dealt with similar damage in the aftermath of the storm.

"I felt like our house was going to cave in," she said. "All our bushes were ripped off and floated down the street."

Hurricane Opal, a Category 3 storm, had winds of up to 150 mph when it hit the western Carolinas in October 1995. Opal was responsible for 27 deaths and more than \$3 billion in damage.

Damage from 1996's Hurricane Fran, also a Category 3 storm, was not as costly as Hugo's, but it hit the Triangle area almost as hard.

Fran, which was clocked at 115 mph at its peak in September 1996, caused 37 deaths and \$5 billion in damages.

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

# Decision on Classes to Come Today

By ARMAN ANVARI  
Staff Writer

Interim Chancellor Bill McCoy will make a decision by noon today on whether to cancel Thursday's classes in wake of an approaching hurricane, a University official said.

With Hurricane Floyd projected to skirt the Florida coast and make a bee-line toward North Carolina, officials have started to make plans regarding the possible cancellation of classes and evacuation of off-campus residence halls.

UNC's Emergency Warning Committee, a group of campus administrators that meets whenever a potentially disastrous situation emerges, will help McCoy decide whether classes should be canceled.

Granville Towers General Manager Dennis Erny sent a letter to all residents Tuesday notifying them that if Hurricane Floyd hits, residents should make arrangements to go home if necessary.

University officials sent out an advisory e-mail message to all individuals

affiliated with UNC on Tuesday night notifying them of weather hazards.

Officials will disseminate the final decision as soon as it is available to them this afternoon via television, radio and the Internet, Kitchen said.

Classes were canceled Sept. 6 when Hurricane Fran hit Chapel Hill in 1996. Classes were canceled again later that week as students banded together to clean up the debris on campus.

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

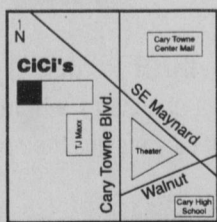
HOME OF THE 7 DAY  
**\$2.99**  
**BUFFET**

**ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT  
BUFFET EVERYDAY!**

**PIZZA • PASTA • SALAD • DESSERTS**

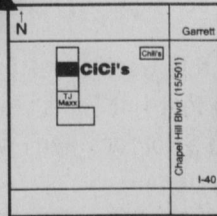
Kids  
10 & under  
**\$1.99**

Come be our guest at:



**CARY**  
683-F Cary Towne Blvd.  
(919) 469-9988

**NOW OPEN!**



**DURHAM**  
4600 Chapel Hill Blvd.  
Oak Creek Village  
(919) 403-2424

CALL YOUR LOCAL STORE FOR GREAT TAKE-OUT VALUES



**CiCi's Pizza**

The Best Pizza Value Anywhere.®

SAUCES & DOUGH  
**MADE FRESH DAILY**