

# Hurricane Fran blasts campus, halts classes

By Shevonne Morgan

As Hurricane Fran swept North Carolina's coast, she paid St. Augustine's College a costly visit. Numerous trees, powerlines and light poles bowed to her 85 mph winds.

To date, the recovery process has cost \$75,000 and is expected, eventually, to exceed the million dollar mark.

"There is a lot more damage than what people can see," says Clifton McMullen, physical plant director.

As a result of property damage and power outages on St. Aug's campus, thousands of dollars must be spent to replace furniture, computers and other damaged materials.

The Allied Health building was the hardest hit. Collapsed trees badly damaged the exterior, as well as most of the equipment inside. The Hunter building's roof was ripped completely off, causing extensive leaks. All five dormitories were subject to minor repairs.

It will take an estimated three to five months for the college to fully recover.

Below are individual stories by students who showed a variety of reactions to the Big Blow:

## Lifesaver

The wind blew so hard, the windows rattled. The trees moved backwards and forward, some even fell. The concrete lifted and moved from right under your feet. The rain came down so fast everything started to flood.

Thursday evening was a disaster for everyone in Raleigh. No one expected Hurricane Fran, to hit like she did. She was here only for a few hours but left behind days of destruction. She left her mark of pain behind that would be remembered and recorded in history as one of Raleigh's most disastrous days.

Aisha Jordan, a rising junior from Pittsburgh, Penn., who is sitting out this semester came to St. Augustine's College for a visit when Fran hit. When she arrived at the train station, she was astonished at the uprooted trees, branches being used as wind-shield wipers and many cars damaged or destroyed.

Patiently she waited outside in the rain hoping to find transportation to St. Aug. The train station was closing and no cabs were available.

After being stranded for over three hours she began to walk.

When a car pulled up along side her, she was scared to look.

Jordan pulled her bright yellow hood to the side and took a quick glance at who was alongside of her. She started to walk faster. Unaware of what the next move might be, she prayed.

Jordan heard the sound of a car horn, "beep, beep." She stopped in hopes it would be someone she knew.

Jordan said her heart rejoiced that it was her former roommate's boyfriend, Bryon Gaddy, junior from Fairmont.

Gaddy questioned her, "Girl, what are you doing here?"

Relieved Aisha said, "I missed everyone so I came down for a surprise visit, I think I'm the one who got the surprise." Less than a second later, they heard a loud noise. A power line and telephone booth fell. Then a sign

fell only inches from where Jordan had been walking.

Gaddy turned and stared at Aisha in shock.

Shaking his head, he leaned back, and said, "You're a fool and don't even know it. I just saved your life." *By Quinhon Goodlove*

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## No false alarm

Heavy winds and rain shook the Triangle in September. Is it just another thunderstorm? No. This is the big one. Hurricane Fran came to the Triangle for a short, and unpleasant visit.

With downed power lines and water outages, power and water were missed. Backroads, communities, and some area schools were temporarily out of commission.

Matthew Christmas, a senior at Saint Augustine's College, tells his story.

Christmas decided that the storm warnings might be a false alarm, despite the heavy rain pounding on his roof and the loud winds knocking at his door. With this thought he decided that he would go out to visit a friend. "Every road that I traveled seemed to be a dead end with a tree blocking my way," says Christmas, describing his drive out of North Raleigh.

Still acknowledging that the hurricane warnings could actually be real he was determined to get to his friend's home in Chapel Hill. "Focus was a major part of my drive," says Christmas, because the monstrous winds and drowning rains were trying to overpower the car.

After reaching Chapel Hill, Christmas made a short visit because the weather was getting a lot worse and he still had to make it back home.

After dodging more trees and downed power lines Christmas thought his route was clear. After reaching residential streets he realized that his path was not so clear after all. "I had to drive on



*This is Light-* Students and professors joined efforts to move the debris from St. Augustine's campus. French professor Madame Olivia Jones (right) and business student Raquel Carey take trash to the bin.

the sidewalk just to miss trees," says Christmas, describing his drive home.

There were not only fallen power lines and trees, there were also massive power outages in the area. "Man, aside from headlights I could barely see!" exclaimed Christmas. Further up the street he saw figures with flashlights. Thinking it was people trying to find their way in their homes, but taking a closer look, he noticed that these men were nude. "This storm was more serious than I thought," laughs Christmas. *by Felisa Rainey*

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## Dorms were scary

Hurricane Fran was a grade three hurricane with sustained winds of 115 mph. Heavy rainfall caused flood damage to homes, businesses and churches. Power lines were knocked down leaving the city without power.

The topic of the following week--everyone, everywhere--was centered on her. What were you doing? Where were you when Fran came to Raleigh?

Tonia McMillan, a junior from Laurinburg, says she struggled to keep the rain from damaging her property. The sixth floor of Weston had prior problems with roofing. "My floors were wet for days." Tiles from the ceiling fell as soon as she walked into her room.

Sam Morris, a senior from Norfolk, Va., was calm at the time of the storm. He says he had been through a storm years ago. In 1985 Hurricane Oscar ripped through Norfolk. "I must say, I believe Fran was more destructive than Oscar. My electricity stayed on longer than any other person in Boyer Hall. At midnight I was sitting in the

dark with friends. We decided to go down stairs to the lobby. I wanted to go outside. I tested the winds for a quick minute, but quickly turned around because they were so strong."

Carla Johnson, a sophomore from Trenton, N.J., told scary stories with friends in her dorm room. "We had about seven people in my hot room. We also played a game called Wisconsin Sleepers. It's a game that secretly tests participants. Rules of the game are only known by people who have played before, and gained the Sleeper status."

Aseelah Uhuru, a sophomore from Charlotte, was on a date with a friend when Fran blew through. "I was stranded. I did not return till midnight, only to find that there was no way for me to drive on the yard because trees had already fallen. I ended up walking to Weston Hall."

Dashon Thorp, a freshman from Trenton, NJ, dramatically stresses that he hasn't seen anything like Fran. It reminded him of the movie "Twister". "I stayed in Lynch Hall. Our dorm director told us to go to Atkinson Hall in the basement. It started to flood so we went to the Fine Arts building." (He exaggerates how water was up to his knees when he walked.) *by Adriane Scott*

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## New family ties made

*Hurricane Fran was mean, the worst many North Carolina residents admitted they have ever seen. She uprooted our trees with her strong breeze, left us for days without any lights. We tried and tried to keep things bright, but there is no doubt, Fran gave us such a fright. Yet, in the midst of all this confusion, many remained calm and slept through Fran like little lambs.*

Hurricane Fran left a lasting impression on Raquel Mckenzie,

a second semester senior at St. Aug. A native of the Bahamas, Raquel confessed that she did not believe for one minute that Fran would come anywhere near Raleigh judging from all of her hurricane experiences at home. "Most hurricanes would simply pass over. No one really paid any attention to Fran's warnings. My mother never even purchased hurricane supplies!"

Told that Boyer Hall, the new men's dorm, had lost its electricity, Raquel confessed that she could not go to sleep. The girls were so loud on the fifth floor of her building looking outside at the storm, they began to call their parents. "This was when I felt that maybe I needed to be alarmed."

When did the knowledge that Fran was real hit her? The Augite replies, "Like a bolt of lightning, suddenly I realized that I was a million miles from home and that I had no where to go if Fran hit my dorm, or me."

"So what did you do, did you stay on campus all during the hurricane?"

"No way. My friend Rolisha called me and invited me to go with her to her grandmother's house until it was safe to return. At first I was reluctant to go because I did not want to impose on her or her family, but I was really glad I did."

The Augite's face lights up as she tells how warm and friendly Rolisha's family was. "They took me in with loving arms. I felt like I was at home with my very own family. They had a generator, so I was hardly ever in darkness. I ate so much home cooking that week I was almost calling her grandmother "Grandma," but most important, I was safe."

Raquel confessed that she did not know how much damage

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