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HURRICANE RELIEF: HOW TO HELP

The Red Cross seeks volunteers and donations. E-mail occhapnc@intrex.net for more info.

Supplies fundraiser
The DTH is collecting new socks and underwear for victims in areas affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita; bring them to the dropbox in our office, in Union Suite 2409.

Smaller Rita still smashes coast

OFFICIALS TO EVACUEES: STAY AWAY

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEAUMONT, Texas — Hurricane Rita pummeled east Texas and the Louisiana coast Saturday, battering communities with floods and intense winds, but residents were relieved that the once-dreaded storm proved far less fierce and deadly than Katrina.

After the storm passed, authorities pleaded with the roughly 3 million evacuees not to hurry home too soon, fearing more chaos.

"Be patient, stay put," said Texas Gov. Rick Perry. "If you are in a safe place with food, water, bedding, you are better remaining

there for the time being."

In any other hurricane season, Rita might have seemed devastating. It knocked out power for more than 1 million customers, sparked fires across the hurricane zone and swamped Louisiana shoreline towns with a 15-foot storm surge that required daring boat and helicopter rescues of hundreds of people.

But the new storm came in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, with its 1,000-plus death toll, cataclysmic flooding of New Orleans and staggering destruction in Mississippi.

By contrast, Rita spared Houston, New Orleans and other major cities a direct hit. By Saturday evening, the only reported death was in Mississippi, where one person was killed by a tornado that spun off the remains of the hurricane.

"The damage is not as serious as we had expected it to be," said R. David Paulison, acting director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. "The evacuations worked."

Damage to the vital concentration of oil refineries along the coast appeared relatively light, although industry officials said it was too early to assess whether there would be an impact on oil prices. Valero Energy Corp.

said its 255,000-barrel-per-day Port Arthur refinery sustained significant damage to two cooling towers and a flare stack and would need at least two weeks for repairs.

Rita roared ashore at 3:30 a.m. EDT close to the Texas-Louisiana border as a Category 3 hurricane with top winds of 120 mph and warnings of up to 25 inches of rain. By evening, it was downgraded to a tropical depression with top sustained winds of 35 mph as it moved slowly through east Texas toward Shreveport, La.

Before it weakened, Rita showed its strength across a broad region between

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GROUPS MARCH ON D.C.

BY ERIN GIBSON WASHINGTON, D.C. ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

Anti-war protesters from Orange County, N.C., Orange County, Calif. and everywhere in between gathered Saturday to show their disapproval of the occupation of Iraq in a rally and march on the White House.

Estimated to be at least 100,000 strong, protesters filled one section of the lawn between the Washington Monument and the White House with crosses, the Star of David and crescent moons to honor the more than 1,900 soldiers who have died since the beginning of the war.

Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a soldier killed in Iraq, ended her Bring Them Home Now Bus Tour in

the capital and spoke to the crowds of people flooding the White House lawns.

She was joined on stage by Rev. Jesse Jackson.

"We need a people's movement to end this war," she said. "We have to do our jobs as Americans."

"We'll be the checks and balances on this out-of-control American government."

Sheehan, who made headlines camping outside of President Bush's Texas ranch, thanked everyone for supporting her and joining together to demand change.

Protesters marched down Constitution Avenue and up 15th Street in the hopes that their message would be heard within the White House walls. Bush was not in town for the protest as he was monitoring the development of Hurricane Rita.

Among the protesters were veterans of U.S. wars, soldiers' families and friends, concerned citizens and some soldiers who still are active in the military.

Protesters carried several items designed to evoke feelings regarding the brutality of the war, such as a rope accompanied by pictures of each soldier who had died hanging from it.

Several groups from North Carolina also came to show their support.

Mike Tuggle, a self-proclaimed conservative, came to the rally with about 60 people

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About 100,000 protesters swarmed on the nation's Capitol building this weekend for an anti-war protest. Rev. Jesse Jackson and Bring Them Home Now Bus Tour leader Cindy Sheehan were among the attendees.

DTH/ELLEN PENNINGER

Officials look to halt GPA swelling

BY STEPHEN MOORE STAFF WRITER

Officials at UNC-Chapel Hill have begun discussions of a possible change in the way student grade point averages are calculated.

Continuing national concerns about grade inflation prompted the Educational Policy Committee, a subcommittee of the UNC-CH Faculty Council, to look more closely at ways of curbing the problem.

The committee is still in the early stages of a debate about whether any action should be taken to correct a measurable increase in the percentage of A's awarded at the University, said Peter Gordon, committee chairman and psychology professor at UNC-CH.

"We have begun to explore techniques that give an alternative to the traditional grade point average," Gordon said.

One system being considered would continue to use standard letter grades but also would account for the difficulty of the courses students select and the grading practices of their professors, he said.

"I make the comparison, and it should be a loose comparison, of it to the RPI that's used in college sports," Gordon said, refer-

SEE INFLATION, PAGE 7

Candidates dial into blog scene

BY JAKE POTTER ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

Some of the candidates vying for municipal office this year are taking a progressive approach to winning over an evolving constituency — they're modernizing their communication methods.

The practice of blogging emerged from the "What's New" sections of various Web

sites and has transformed into a major trend toward average-citizen journalism — hundreds of sites

such as LiveJournal and Xanga boast easy-to-start blog hosting.

Three of the eight Chapel Hill Town Council candidates keep blogs on their campaign Web sites. One candidate each from both the Carrboro mayoral and Board of Aldermen races also maintains updated journals.

Orangepolitics.org, a local issues forum maintained by Chapel Hill resident Ruby Sinreich, also is playing an active role in this fall's municipal elections.

The blog, whose discussion threads

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With new initiatives, open discourse needed



GUEST COLUMNIST

James Moeser describes some of his new projects.

Welcome back to campus. I hope that your summer was as relaxing and stimulating as mine. I am pleased to say that while construction activity is still very high, September brought the opening of the new recreation facility at Rams Head Center (the dining hall opened last spring) and the reopening of Memorial Hall after three years of renovations. Both of these facilities exist to serve the students, and I hope that you will take advantage of both of them.

What does the Chancellor of the University do in the summer?

In a general way all of the campus administrators, including myself, continue the activities that occupy us during the academic year — working with faculty, staff and student representatives on a variety of issues. My work speaking to donors, alumni, community groups and civic leaders also continues. Through our statewide outreach initiative, Carolina Connects, I travel to communities throughout North Carolina to help strengthen the University's connections to the people that we serve.

I also represent the University in the national higher education arena,

speaking on issues such as athletics, accessibility and academic freedom. This summer I had the chance to address the University's role in an international arena.

In June my wife Susan and I led a delegation from Chapel Hill to Singapore and Bangkok. Our trip had several purposes, one of which was to participate in a meeting of university presidents and chancellors representing the Association of American Universities and our counterparts from the Association of Pacific Rim Universities who came from Australia, China, India,

Japan, Thailand and South America. We were hosted by the National University of Singapore, which was celebrating its centennial.

While in Singapore, we met 25 rising Carolina sophomores and were able to hear about their experiences studying abroad. We also met with colleagues at the National University of Singapore to discuss our relationship and potential new programs, including a proposed undergraduate degree between the two universities. Officials at the

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TRAINING DAY UNC'S ROTC army cadets hold an exercise in Duke Forest.

RESPONDING TO THE CALL Groups see several different ways to provide relief.

MULTIMEDIA See more images from this weekend's protest in Washington, D.C.

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SPOOK-TACULAR

Paul Miller, better known as DJ Spooky That Subliminal Kid, put on his multimedia remix of "Birth of a Nation" on Friday at Memorial Hall.



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PEEKING INSIDE

Protesters organize Saturday to call attention to UNC's use of rats in alcohol studies, gathering on Franklin Street dressed with rat makeup.

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MAKING A STAND

The UNC football team earns its first win of the season against ACC rival N.C. State, combining solid defense with an impressive run attack.

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