

# The Daily Tar Heel

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Two years after Hurricane Katrina:  
a Daily Tar Heel special report, part 1 of 5  
Tuesday: Business returns to the coast



For miles along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, concrete slabs and eerie skeletons are all that remain of most homes. Rebuilding progresses inland, but the beachfront is missing.

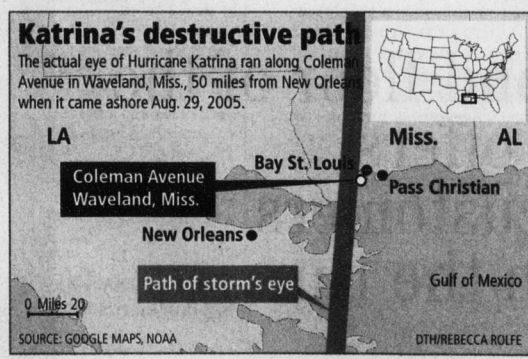
BY ERIC JOHNSON AND JOSEPH R. SCHWARTZ  
SENIOR WRITERS WAVELAND, Miss.

**G**one. That was the word most often used to describe this beachfront community after Hurricane Katrina came ashore Aug. 29, 2005.

The storm shattered the town's main street, leaving nothing but a hardened bank vault and a collection of concrete slabs. Whole neighborhoods disappeared as street after street of solid, older homes disintegrated into scattered piles of debris.

The core of Waveland was not simply damaged or flooded. It was gone. And now, nearly two years later, much of the town remains that way.

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## Rebuilding from scratch

New home, life destroyed in days

BY JOSEPH R. SCHWARTZ  
SENIOR WRITER

WAVELAND, Miss. — Susan Underwood always wanted to move to the beach. Twenty-four days after settling into her dream house, the beach moved to her.

"It looked like it was going to be the coolest place to live," she says. "Overnight, it was all gone."

**TUESDAY** Chris and Crystal Blissett are trying to raise a family in a FEMA trailer.

When her husband, Frank, was tapped to sell pharmaceuticals in Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida and Alabama, the then-Atlanta residents and Tar Heel-state natives could pick anywhere in the four-state region to make a home.

They didn't know anyone from Waveland. A map and a single visit was all it took for them to buy a three-year-old home in this prime beachfront



Susan Underwood describes the damage Hurricane Katrina left in the neighborhood she moved to three weeks before the storm.

community with an eclectic local music and art scene, once home to 7,000 residents. They moved into a neighborhood half a mile from the water.

Before their last moving box was unpacked, the couple's new town became ground zero for one of the most vicious natural disasters in U.S. history.

Their home was devastated. A 70-foot pine tree fell into the dining room and kitchen. Water splashed 7 feet high inside. All that remained was the basic

structure. "There were nothing but slabs or a pile of rubble from here to the beach," Susan says, pointing from her doorstep. "We were just one house away from being in destruction."

A lucky bend in the road and a grove of trees sheltered them from some of the flooding. And although bad timing put them in harm's way, their inexperience helped out in surprising

SEE **UNDERWOODS**, PAGE 8

## Brawl erupts during party

Spray clears out Blend nightclub

BY KAYLA CARRICK  
CITY EDITOR

A birthday party at the downtown nightclub Blend ended with a visit from police officers and paramedics early Sunday.

Two UNC students rented the Rosemary Street nightclub to celebrate their 21st birthdays, but the soiree turned chaotic when two men started a fight, said Idan Eckstein, Blend's general manager.

The fight turned into an all-out brawl that several partygoers say was ended by clouds of a chemical spray that sent people scrambling for the doors.

"I don't know how anything was handled," said Gabe Wright, who walked into the club to help a friend after the fight started. "All I know is it was complete chaos. It was like a scene out of a movie."

Club employees immediately called the police, and Chapel Hill police confirmed they responded to the fight call for crowd control.

One officer said that she responded to the scene but that no officers went inside the building. The officer said no incident report was filed with the department because it was a "crowd-control call." The officer declined to answer any more questions or give her name.

The crowd left the scene once the police arrived, Eckstein said.

It is unclear who sprayed the chemical that cleared the club, but Blend manager Ryan Earls said it must have been someone in the crowd. Senior LaToya Evans said she couldn't see for 30 minutes because of the chemical.

"It was really like a run-for-your-life type thing," she said. "A lot of people had asthma and were gasping for air."

Evans, a former Daily Tar Heel summer columnist, was bleeding after crawling out of the club on broken glass. Several people who left the club were immediately helped by paramedics, she said. UNC Hospitals and the police department were unable to confirm if anyone was taken to the hospital Sunday night.

The club sustained significant damage — bar stools were thrown around, and furniture was destroyed. Blend's owner and Earls both were punched during the fiasco.

Wright graduated from UNC in May and traveled from Charlotte for the party. He was outside the club when the fight broke out. All of the people tried to escape the

SEE **BLEND**, PAGE 8

# Carson administration touts summer progress

Sophomore Reorientation set for September

BY KELLY GIEDRAITIS AND WHITNEY KISLING  
SENIOR WRITERS

Student Body President Eve Carson wants her first progress report to be accessible to students and administrators alike.

The Summer Report, a 123-page document that details committee and Cabinet work on Carson's platform so far, was released Sunday night.

"I want this to be a workable document," she said.

Among the platform accomplishments is the new Sophomore Reorientation program, which aims to acclimate returning students to academic and student services.

The report also recaps unanticipated projects, such as advocating for a nearby location for the one-stop early-voting site at the Franklin Street post office.

"This voting thing — it was important, but at the same time we lost some valuable time on our other projects," Student Body

Vice President Mike Tarrant said.

As Cabinet members settle into their offices, they said they're realizing the time constraint of being in office for just one year. "The pace can be so challenging," Carson said. "I just have such a tremendous sense of urgency."

Carson set out her goals in a 43-page platform last semester. Most of her main points then remain her key objectives now.

From a campus community integrated via technology to a big-name speaker series and a junior-level scholarship, Carson said she plans to tackle all of her platform points.

"We're going to be working on every-



Student Body President **Eve Carson** released a 123-page report about summer initiatives.

thing this year," she said. "We've already started working on probably everything."

And though the Cabinet has delegated responsibilities and committees have begun work, Carson said it hasn't been easy.

She has met with administrators to dis-

cuss key ideas, but seeing her plans to fruition requires more, she said.

"Administrators work with a different time schedule than students," Student Body Secretary Mac Mollison said. "They think in decades. We think in years."

One of Carson's planks was to encourage the creation of more study-abroad-exchange programs at UNC, so members of her Cabinet met with Bob Miles, associate dean for study abroad.

According to the report, "Dr. Miles was not necessarily optimistic about the pro-

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<p><b>announcement</b></p> <p><b>WE'RE HIRING</b></p> <p>The DTH is accepting applications for new staff. Come to our interest meeting at 5:30 p.m. today in Union 3411 for more information. Applications are available in Union 2409 or at www.dailytarheel.com.</p>	<p><b>online</b></p> <p><b>BLOGGIN' WITH THE DTH</b></p> <p>Check out the DTH online for our revamped blogs section. Read about and discuss campus, town, and state and national news.</p>		<p><b>city   page 4</b></p> <p><b>HAPPY BIRTHDAY</b></p> <p>Poet Laureate Mike Troy spoke and recited poetry in honor of Horace Williams' 149th birthday Friday at the former philosophy professor's house.</p>	<p><b>this day in history</b></p> <p><b>AUG. 27, 1965 ...</b></p> <p>A Chapel Hill board unanimously votes to disallow the use of a house on Vance Street for UNC offices, citing a fear that "hippies would move into the neighborhood."</p>	<p><b>weather</b></p> <p>T-Storms H 90, L 64</p> <p><b>index</b></p> <p>police log ..... 2 calendar ..... 2 sports ..... 16 games ..... 5 opinion ..... 14</p>
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