

**Brian Lukas:**

There were so many people that came to us seeking information about their family, their friends, and the condition of their neighborhood. So many questions with few or no answers. They needed someone to take the time just to listen to them. Exhausted, and sometimes in tears, they wanted to tell their story. In most cases it was their faces, framed by the tears in their eyes, that told their stories of crisis in Hurricane Katrina.

**Voices from Hurricane Katrina**

Hurricane Hunter Pilot Roger Gardner:

“What’s going through your mind is when you see something of that magnitude, you thinking, I sure hope it weakens before it gets there. If it doesn't weaken before it gets there, it gets real easy because there isn't going to be anything left.”

9th Ward Resident: “The last time I saw him personally was the night we evacuated. We did everything we could to get him to come with us, but he refused. He thought this was going to be just like all the other times. When boats were sent out to come and get him, they couldn't find the house because the water was so high.”





Gentilly Resident: “Don’t even look like people lived here. The whole neighborhood is just gone.”



Biloxi Resident: ”Did he have to be rescued? They had to take him off the roof? Oh, thank God Johnny's alive!”

Glen Pitre Film Maker: “Oh and you know it was the little things you saw. You became numb to the flooded houses, but when you see some kid's toy floating by, the tears would well up. It became human. It became emotional. Bricks can be replaced and wood can be cut and all of that, but memories, you know, that's what makes us who we are. And when you rip those away, than we're not who we were.”

Evacuees at the transfer position near Causeway and I-10: **“We’re not animals!”**

Bay St. Louis resident: "I’ve seen war pictures that didn't look this torn up. It does. It looks like a bomb just went off and tore everything up. I'd hate to see that happen but it does. It's hard to put into words how bad everything looks.”





Kenny Campo - Shell Beach: “This Hurricane spared no one, and I don't care who you were. Either you were the richest man in the world if you were living around New Orleans area, it affected everybody. It didn't say well, you know, I left the poor people alone and took the rich or I left the rich and took the poor it took everything. It took schools, churches. It didn't leave nothing back. Every business, every business, every mom and pop business, big chain stores – it didn't spare anybody.”

Resident of Plaquemines Parish: The worst thing I think is that everybody's gone and everybody's scattered everywhere. If it had been just been my house, you know, at least I would have had my friends. So I think losing the community is actually harder than losing just your home, because you're losing your whole home, everything.



Gentilly resident: “I just want to get my papers for my business and my keys for my rental property, and I'm going to get out and hopefully get my kids baby pictures. That's what I want. Baby pictures. They're 30 and 27. I want my baby pictures.”



Kathy Nesser  
Lakeview Resident: “And I know that truly nothing in there is salvageable, but maybe, and I still standing here knowing nothing in there, not a picture is salvageable, but maybe my grandmother's first communion rosary from 1905 is left. Maybe my confirmation rosary that we have passed down for years. Maybe there's one thing. And I know you're crazy but you have to see it for yourself.”





Thelma Garrett, 9th Ward Resident: People who live here had a certain comfort level that we thought it would work (the levee), and you don't know that things won't work until a disaster happens.

Harry Lee, Sheriff of Jefferson Parish: "I don't know how many people are left in East Jefferson, but fortunately for us more so than in New Orleans, they heeded our advice to get out of town, and of course I'm sure there were a lot of people in New Orleans that didn't have the capabilities to get out of town. These are the people who lost their lives, because they weren't capable of getting out."



Rhonda Claire, St. Bernard Resident: "And I mean drowned. My uncle said they screamed and screamed and screamed and then he knew they died because there was just no screams anymore."

Louisiana State Medical Examiner Louis Cataldie : "We may not find all the folks who have disappeared. I'm anticipating some folks who are in the marsh. I'm anticipating that they may have washed out when the alluvial flow of the surge that came through and then pulled back out into the canal. So, there may be some people

we'll may never find, which is a tragic because folks won't have closure."



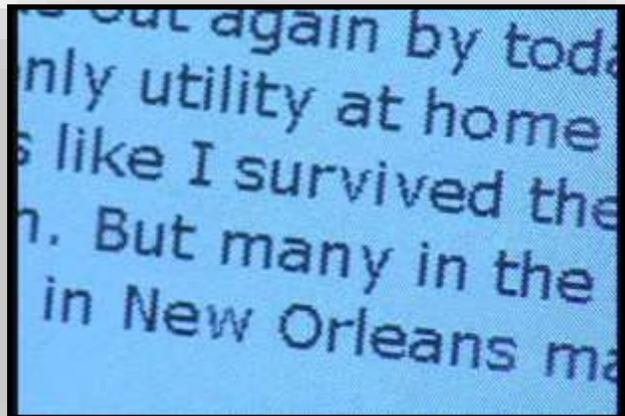
Rose Jones, 9th Ward Resident: “Well, my mother told me, whatever you do, I want you to let people know if they have any doubt, don't wait for any city official or anyone to find your love one. Go in the inside, go and check to see if your love one is in there or look through the debris, go look in the attic. Take a chance. At least it will clear your conscience to say you did it, because my sister has been here for six months, and just think if my mother would have gave up and not went into that home. And with all the DNA that was taken, she would never have been found. We would have never known my sister was laying in that home just waiting there. And the way

she was laying there, with her arm stretched out, like she was sleeping and the surge just came in and caught her off guard.”

Lester Arcement - Lafitte Resident: “The next step is that we're going to be the coastline. You know, it doesn't take that many years either. It's eroding real fast. Real, real fast.”

Resident of Gulf Shores: “We're OK. We're alive. We have a home and I have a job, and I'm so lucky to be here.”

Jeffrey Rouse, Psychiatrist Orleans Parish Coroner's Office: “You never expect to see Armageddon come to your town.”



Adalis Berzant, Carrollton: “I'd like the people in Washington to know we weren't sitting back waiting for the federal government to take care of us. We just don't know how to do this. They don't even know how to do this. We were working before the

storm and were trying to pull our lives together. This is something we didn't ask for. I challenge anybody in Washington to come home and no longer have a home or a family or infrastructure and see how they do. And everyone wants you to suck it in. Things are difficult, very difficult."



Homeland Security Secretary - Janet Napolitano: There is some serious red tape going on down here. That was my immediate reaction when I visited here, and I speak as a former governor. And to me it was blocking how long it was taking just to get decision made regardless of whether you agreed with the decisions.

US Army Corps of Engineers Emergency Operations Supervisor: "We're praying that

Hurricane Rita continues to go to an inhabited land somewhere out west. To the left of our position are the houses have been destroyed by the 17th Street Canal levee breach. That is the devastation of a 20-foot storm surge. You can't even see the piling of the houses. They've been obliterated. It's total devastation."

Larry Ingargiola, St. Bernard Office of Emergency Preparedness Director: "I still hear those phone calls. People were calling up saying we were trapped in our attic. We are on our cell phone and we're trapped in our attic. I knew deep in my heart that with some of these people, I was going to be the last person they were going to talk to. That's not a good feeling."

Augustine Green, 9th Ward Resident: "I'm dirty. I'm not clean. I'm not clean. I'm used to being clean. I'm dirty. It's hard."



Barbara Rainey, St Bernard Parish Resident: “It just feels so sad when you’re riding in a neighborhood, that, it’s just gone.”



Trevor Raphael, Lower 9th Ward: “I saw a house floating by. I didn’t see no dead bodies, thank God.”

Phil Grigsby, National Weather Service: “It (Katrina) went from a Category 2 hurricane to a Category 5 hurricane within a 12 hour period of time, which is unheard of.”

St. Bernard Parish President Junior Rodriguez: “The force of that water and the winds that drove that water, I don’t know if there was a levee that could have saved us from that.”

Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco:  
“You know, in the end.....only God knows why this happened.”



