

DIXIE®DRAWL

★ PEARL RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE ★ 101 U.S. HIGHWAY 11 NORTH ★ POPLARVILLE, MS 39470 ★ SEPTEMBER 2005 ★

Hurricane Katrina strikes PRCC Damage estimates on campus: \$30-40 million

POPLARVILLE - Hurricane Katrina devastated South Mississippi, including Pearl River Community College, with a force not seen since Hurricane Camille 36 years ago.

The date: Monday, Aug. 29, 2005, will be remembered for quite some time.

Winds that blew as high as 120 miles-per-hour on the PRCC campus began just before dawn and by the time they subsided after 3 p.m., Katrina had left massive damage in her wake.

By Monday night, South Mississippians began to feel the damage of Katrina on a broader scale.

Communications were down, power was off, water systems were crippled, and transportation routes were demolished.

■ M.R. White Coliseum, which was built in 1974, suffered extensive interior and exterior damage. It will probably be torn down.

■ Moody Hall, a three-story structure built in 1926 and the oldest classroom building among the state's 15 community and junior colleges, suffered heavy damage. Dr. John Grant, Vice President for Instruction, and Athletic Director Richard Mathis were among 20 evacuees who watched from the basement floor as the auditorium roof blew off during the height of the storm, resulting in extensive interior damage from wind and rain.

■ Two dormitories, Lamar Hall and Marion Hall, received severe damage and, before all is said and done, may have to be torn down and rebuilt.

■ The school's vehicle maintenance shop was demolished, roof and water damage was evident on every building on campus, including the president's home, and debris from limbs and trees blocked the roadways.

"We had roof damage on 27 of the 53 buildings on campus," said Clint Tapper, Director of the Physical Plant at PRCC. "Every building on campus had some type of damage. We had a tremendous amount of water damage. We have four buildings that could possibly be totaled after we get the reports from the insurance company and the engineers."

"The cleanup just to get to where we could get to the buildings was a major chore with the trees and limbs and such."

The bottom line: Pearl River Community College suffered between \$30-40 million in damages from Hurricane Katrina.

"It's bad," said PRCC President William Lewis, who rode out the storm in the PRCC Technology Center, headquarters for Emergency Services for the city of Poplarville before, during and after the storm.

"This is worse than Hurricane Camille."

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This 12-page special section was produced by the PRCC Public Relations Department to commemorate the destructive storm and its impact on Pearl River Community College.

Photographs were taken by Pamela Luke, Mitch Deaver, Romn Hague, Dr. John Grant, Clint Tapper, Dr. Adam Breerwood, George Clark and Chuck Abadie, Director of Public Relations.



POPLARVILLE - Moody Hall, a three-story structure built in 1926 and the oldest classroom building among the state's 15 community and junior colleges, suffered heavy damage from Katrina. The auditorium roof blew off during the height of the storm, resulting in extensive interior damage from wind and rain. Photo by Mitch Deaver.

President Bush pays PRCC a visit 'Mississippi is on my mind. We are with you'

POPLARVILLE - Despite the circumstances surrounding Hurricane Katrina, history was made Monday, Sept. 5, 2005, on the campus of Pearl River Community College.

President George Bush became the first sitting president to ever set foot on the PRCC campus, or to visit Poplarville for that matter.

In a response to criticism his administration has been slow to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina, President Bush arrived at the PRCC Technology Center with praise for local relief efforts and assurances more federal help is on the way.



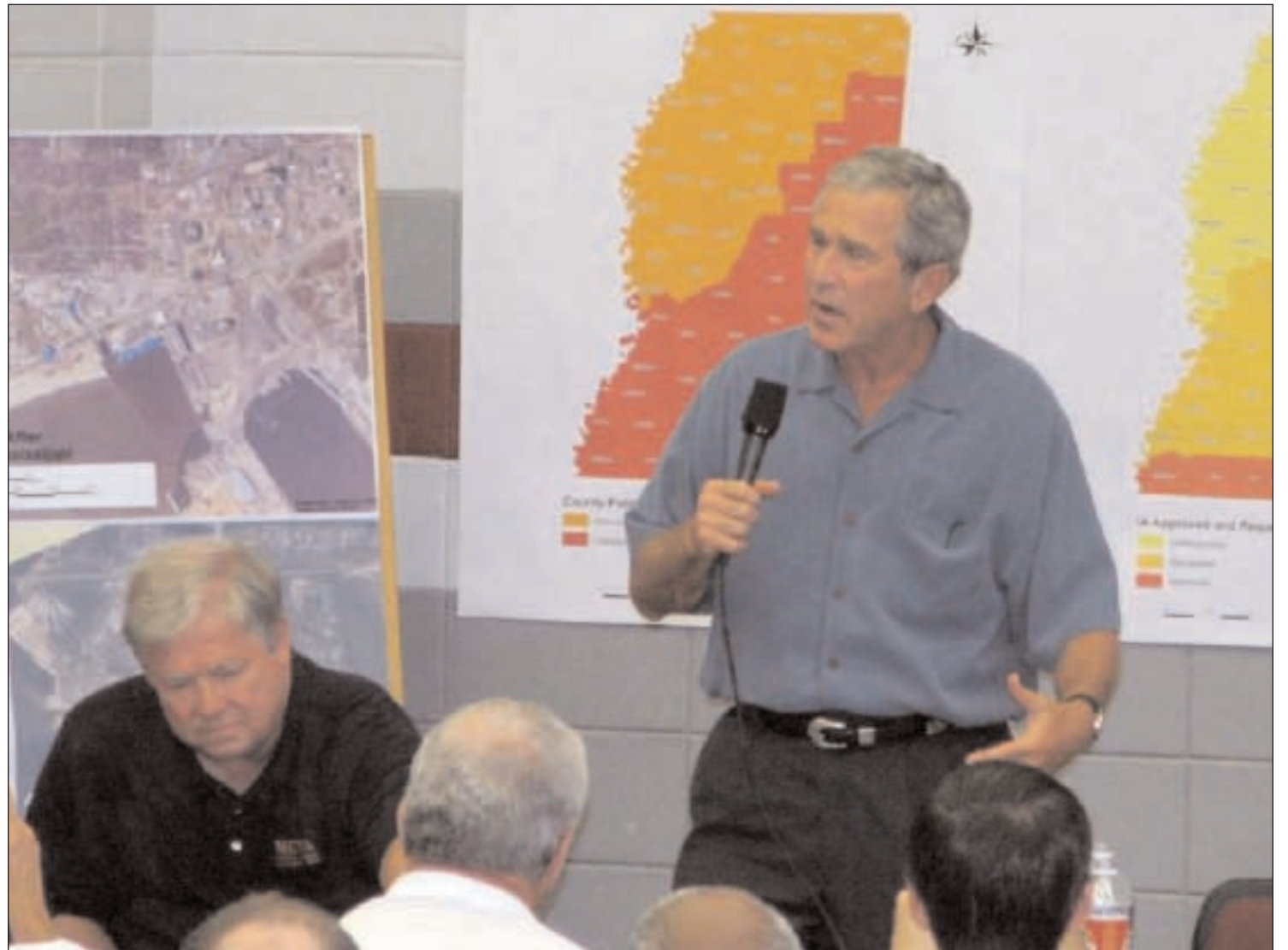
Bush

"Mississippi is on my mind," Bush said. "We are with you. That is what I want you to know."

Speaking to about 250 elected state and local officials, including Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour, U.S. Sen. Trent Lott, and U.S. Rep. Chip Pickering, gathered at PRCC, the president praised local relief efforts. "You showed courage," he said. "People have risked their lives to help."

Bush was optimistic the hurricane-damaged Gulf Coast would be rebuilt bigger and better than before the storm. He told officials they would one day be "cutting ribbons and creating new jobs."

■ See BUSH, Page 4



POPLARVILLE - President Bush, with Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour at his side, spoke to some 250 elected officials Monday, Sept. 5, at Pearl River Community College's Technology Center. The president praised local relief efforts in Pearl River County.

Inside

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