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JASON STEELMAN/THE GAMECOCK

Chi Omega members cheer on the Horseshoe during Bid Day, when USC women find out what sorority they were accepted to.

Sorority sisters rush Horseshoe

By MICHAEL LaFORGIA
THE GAMECOCK

◆ FOR MORE PICTURES OF BID DAY, SEE WWW.DAILYGAMECOCK.COM

In the moments before the envelopes were opened Sunday, first-year electronic journalism student Katie McKinney skittered nervously among the other girls beneath an oak tree in front of the McKissick Museum.

Her mother, Erin, hovered nearby with a camcorder in one hand. Mother and daughter were only two faces in the crowd gathered on the Horseshoe over the

weekend for Bid Day. The annual event marks the end of Rush Week, seven days of interviews and parties during which sororities select new members.

Erin McKinney joined the Kappa Delta sorority when she attended USC years ago. Now a professor in USC's nursing school, she said she didn't pressure her daughter to join Kappa Delta, too.

"I told her it didn't matter what

she did as long as she feels comfortable about the group," Erin McKinney said.

Katie touched her mother's shoulder then moved away, and Erin watched her daughter join the other girls in front of the museum.

"As much as I can remember, it was just like this," she said, looking out at the pockets of cheering sorority girls in colorful T-shirts.

Nearby, Katrina Sorensen, a third-year management and marketing student, stood on the Horseshoe with a neon green banner, ready to greet her sorority's Rho Chis, disaffiliated members who mentor new recruits. Sorensen has been a member of the Delta Zeta sorority since her freshman year.

"It's gotten bigger and it's gotten better," she said of Bid Day. "Sororities have grown over the last three years."

Some on the Horseshoe say they'd prefer the event get smaller or disappear altogether.

Liz Keller, a third-year political science, French student and DeSaussure resident, said the ceremony is an annual nuisance.



JASON STEELMAN/THE GAMECOCK

Katie McKinney, left, a first-year electronic journalism student, hugs a fellow rush member after getting accepted to Kappa Delta, the same sorority her mother joined when she was a student at USC.

◆ Please see BID DAY, page 4

While not a record, freshman class size remains consistent



JASON STEELMAN/THE GAMECOCK

Potential students get a look at the USC campus on Sumter Street Friday. The interest generated during these tours helps determine the following year's freshman class size.

By LADONNA BEEKER
THE GAMECOCK

undergraduate students attend USC.

While freshmen class sizes reached record highs for the past two years, this year's incoming class is slightly smaller, officials said.

USC had 13,000 applicants for the fall, said Dennis Pruitt, vice president for student and alumni services. Of that, about 3,400 are freshmen. Last year's freshman class totaled 3,522, 24,000 graduate and

"This is preliminary data," Pruitt said, because some students have not registered or checked-in to their residence hall. "We had applicants from all 50 states and over 100 countries," Pruitt said.

The "freeze date" for the school year will be the end of September to allow for

◆ Please see FRESHMEN, page 4

Move-in plows on despite storm warnings

By JON TURNER
THE GAMECOCK

Few students were greatly inconvenienced by Hurricane Charley, despite USC officials' announcement of a postponed move-in day.

On Aug. 13, a delay was requested on the USC Web site, echoing similar requests from the College of Charleston and the Citadel. The site asked a postponement of one or even two days because of the heavy rains expected to flush from the storm.

"It actually ended up that we moved in a few more on Friday than we usually do," Housing Director Gene Luna said. "About a hundred, and about 200 fewer on Saturday, and then probably about 400 more than last year on Sunday."

Luna said the hurricane might have actually improved conditions for move-in day.

"This is probably one of the most smooth move-ins we've had in 10 or 20 years," he said. "Hurricane Charley actually brought us great weather. It was cooler, overcast." Luna added that the posted delay hadn't dramatically affected the workloads

of the housing staff.

"There was some preparation attention given to our hurricane preparation," he said. "But we have an emergency preparation plan. That's always the case."

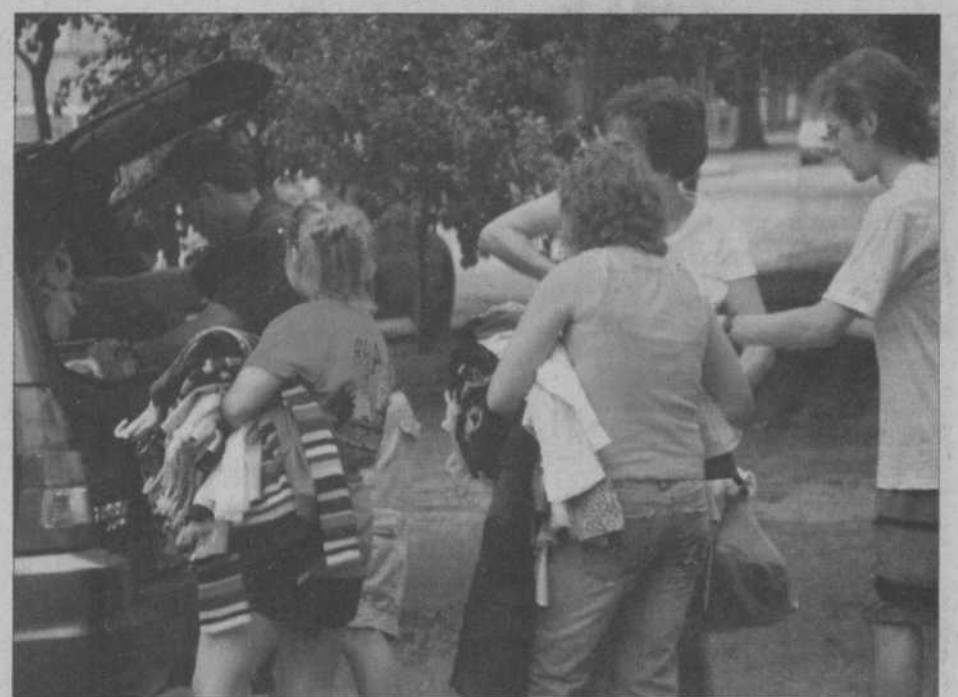
Caitlin Nobles, a second-year business administration student, said she moved in on Aug. 15, but she hadn't taken the threat too seriously. "It wasn't really doing anything at my house, so I didn't really worry about it."

Nobles suggested that delay caused by Charley, the consequently smooth traffic and increased availability of helping hands made her move easier.

"It was pretty nice," she said. "There were plenty of people there already moved in, so they could help me move my stuff in." Alan Walters, a third-year music composition student, lives in Irmo and moved his things over a period of two days.

"I only really worried about the rain moving electronics," he said.

Bonnie Coggins, a third-year marine science student, said that while she lives just off campus, she volunteered to help with the parking management for two hours on



JASON STEELMAN/THE GAMECOCK

Preston students help each other on Aug. 14. Despite warnings from USC officials about Hurricane Charley, many students moved in anyway.

◆ Please see HURRICANE, page 5