RISING THE OUT
I’m looking at the sound... it looks like the ocean.

BY CHRIS DAVIS

Four pairs of eyes were pressed against a window Thursday night watching Frances take her fury to North Carolina Beach.

As boats discarded their masts, and roofs began losing their shingles, Croatian boating namesake the scene at 3:10 Canal Drive.

"The water keep on rising above 54 inches show the street," Mr. Seward said at 6:30 p.m. "I’m looking at the sound right now, and it looks like the ocean.

Mr. Seward, and his friends last power and called at about 1 p.m., long before Franks worst winds moved into New Hanover County.

As the water rose, a black Pontiac was swept up by the current and pushed into a house, Mr. Seward said. Boats drifted along Canal Street, brushing by houses and into them.

At about 5:30 p.m., Fran was quiet.

The bell gave Mr. Seward a chance to survey the damage. A look outside revealed a 25-foot boat capsized on the deck of his dock. Mr. Seward said.

Why did they stay?

"I guess I guess," Mr. Seward joked.

In the midst of Frans fury, Mr. Seward watched a generation of water from the swolled flood waters at the base of his Carolina Beach home.

"As God is my witness, we have had a man nowhere right here at the back door," Mr. Seward said. "It was like he was deserted.

Mr. Seward and his friends watched the medic for about an hour before it turned and headed for deeper waters.

"I knew nobody would believe us," he said. "And we’re sitting here without a camera.

On Beach Lake Road Boulevard, Steve Labanez was determined to stay with his business, Seagull Fish and Tackle, until flooding forced him to retreat to his Carolina Beach home. By about 9 p.m. he was forced to go home because five feet of water had flowed his store.

"It looks like somebody dropped a bomb," Mr. Labanez said of storm winds quieted some at about 6:30 p.m. "It hasn’t been on picnic, but it’s over.

Just after 6 p.m. rain was protected in his Atlantic Drive home near Carolina Beach Elementary.

"It’s breathtaking," he said as he peeled off his boots and watched the storm. "It’s a strong new perspective."

Mr. Carty and his family quieted through most of the storm because the winds were so loud it was impossible to concentrate on anything.

During the height of the storm they had to stand just to hear each other.

"It sounds like a big 12 locomotive," Mr. Carty said. "We were just hoping it wouldn’t get any worse."

Lee Douth put back his 40-foot Hatteras yacht, Leather Limit, from Myrtle Beach to Wrightsville Beach, expecting Fran to hit later that week.

Instead, he got caught in the thickest of the storm.

He anchored the yacht in Banks Channel, away from docks. Mr. Douth and the yacht’s gaiter, Richard Matthews, slept little Friday morning as they kept an eye on the time.

Three lines wrapped in the wind. It was a fast for Utopia, which has weathered 60-ninth winds in the Caribbean without damage.

"We just had a rough night," Mr. Douth said. Mr. Beach and his family are buying a house.

"I was just like a dog shivering in the rain," Mr. Douth said at Utopia. "We were just whipping at the end of a chain."

The ride on some Brunswick County beaches wasn’t quite pleasant.

It was winds and rain, and Long Beach resident Jim Forsyth reported little damage in his beachfront, which lies nearest to the center of the island.

Mr. Forsyth, who had a wind sock with a sprinkler, said it had been as high as 7 p.m. 10 mph wind.

Mr. Forsyth passed the time sitting on his front porch with his dogs.

"I was sitting here in the dark," he said at about 7 p.m. "But it was a lot better than last year."

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Staf Writer Philip Hervey, contributed to this report.