SOUTHWESTERN BLACK STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

AWARENESS WEEK

Monday, October 9 - Friday, October 13
in the Commons Lobby and the MSC
also
First Host and Hostess Meeting
For All Interested Students on
October 15th at 5 p.m. in MSC 212

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South Texas residents watch Hurricane Roxanne strengthen

❑ This is the first "R" - named storm since the National Hurricane Center began naming storms in 1950.

BROWNSVILLE (AP) — South Texans kept a watchful eye on Hurricane Roxanne Tuesday, but said it was too early to predict whether the storm would affect the state's coast.

"That's a little too far down in the crystal ball right now to see," said Richard Hagan, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Brownsville.

"There is a possibility that it could come directly our way, that just depends," Hagan said. "It's very obvious with Opal that ... it can change directions pretty quickly."

"But this storm is unpredictable. So we don't know what will happen until it gets into the Gulf."

– Sylvia Stamps
administrative assistant for city of South Padre Island

Cameron County Parks Director Ken Conway said officials on South Padre Island also were watching the storm but had not taken any action.

"We're not seeing any effects yet," he said. "What our plan is is to just carefully monitor the progress of Roxanne. If it becomes a threat, we'll activate our hurricane preparedness plan."

Roxanne — the 17th named storm of the busy 1995 Atlantic hurricane season — formed Monday south of the Cayman Islands, near where Hurricane Opal was born. Roxanne is the first "R"-named storm since the National Hurricane Center started naming storms in 1950.

Texas Gulf residents have been fortunate this year in missing most effects of a series of powerful hurricanes, said Sylvia Stamps, administrative assistant for the city of South Padre Island.

"But this storm is very unpredictable," she said. "So we don't know what will happen until it gets into the Gulf."

At 10 a.m., Roxanne was centered about 115 miles southeast of Cozumel, Mexico. The hurricane was traveling northwest near 8 mph and its top sustained wind speed had increased to 105 mph, making it a strong Category 2 storm on a scale that peaks at five.

Forecasters said it could strengthen even more before making landfall.

A hurricane warning was issued for the east coast of the Yucatan Peninsula from Chetumal north and west to Progreso. Civil authorities declared an emergency alert, warning skippers of fishing boats to return to port, the official Notimex news agency said.

On Monday, people in the Florida Keys had been urged to monitor Roxanne, but forecasters shifted that caution to Texas.

"The Keys are off the hook," said Max Mayfield, a hurricane specialist with the National Hurricane Center in Miami. "It looks like most of the computer models take it westward across the Yucatan into mainland Mexico. Some say it may turn in the general vicinity of South Texas."

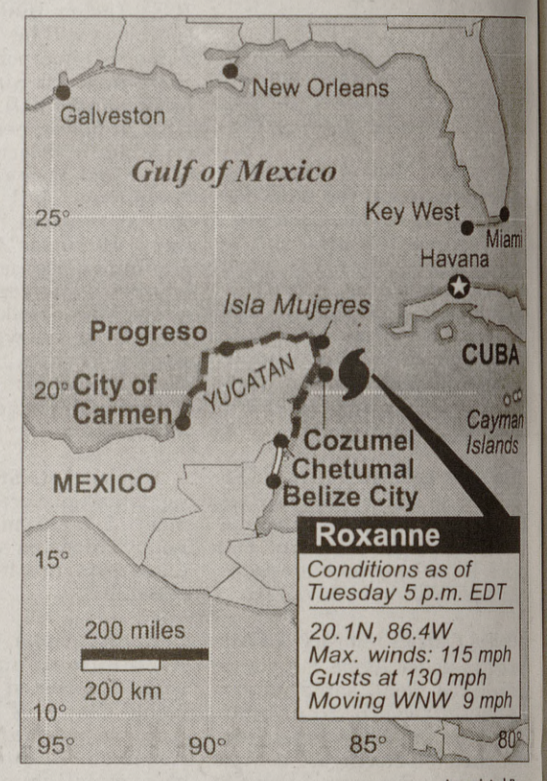
But whether the storm is headed for the Texas coast won't be known until later in the week, Hagan said.

"I'd tell people to just keep an eye on the news. Mainly, just go over your plans once again, what you might do if a hurricane was headed our way," he said.

No watches or warnings had been issued for the Texas coast, according to the U.S. Coast Guard in Corpus Christi.

"We're still just keeping an eye on it. Once it crosses the Yucatan, we'll update our information here," said Coast Guard spokesman Joe Bynum.

Texas coastal residents were put on alert when Opal crashed into Mexico's Gulf Coast last Monday. It strengthened further over the Gulf of Mexico before slamming into the Florida Panhandle, destroying hundreds of homes and businesses, killing at least 20 people in four states and causing $1.8 billion in damage to insured property.



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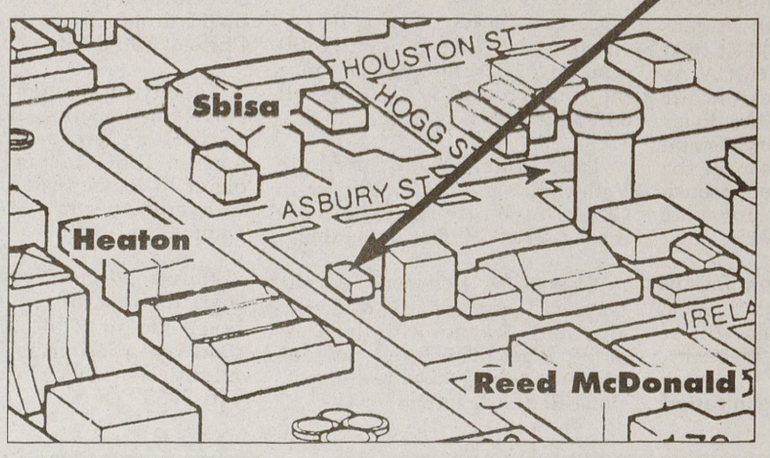
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