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Residents dig out from storm

By Chris Paschenko

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BACLIFF — A wall of water not seen in generations of storms smashed through dozens of homes lining Galveston Bay, and residents spent Tuesday clearing debris and digging out the mud and the muck.

Terry Singeltary refused to evacuate his Bayshore Drive home in Bacliff, saying he feared looters more than Hurricane Ike.

"My grandparents bought this place in 1935, and I wound up with it," Singeltary said. "It made it through a storm in '48, and (hurricanes) Carla and Alicia. I've never seen the water this high."

The Singeltary home survived with water damage in his game room. Singeltary never needed his backup plan: a kayak or an axe stashed in the attic.

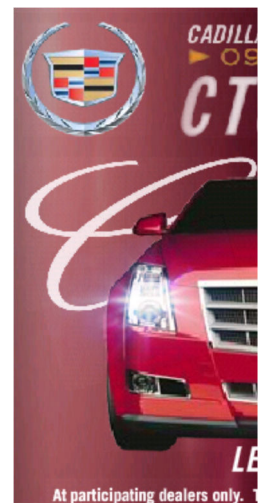
Larry Skains will soon have a better view of the bay, once his neighbor's house and garage, inundated by the waves that deposited hundreds of pounds of concrete riprap inside, are demolished.

The rears of the homes were crushed as the water forced its way through. Skains said he helped his neighbor put a wooden A-frame swing in his house before they evacuated, but the swing somehow made it across the street and in Skains' backyard.

Skains said the Bacliff area is the highest bay front ground in Galveston County, yet his home had 6 inches of mud and water inside. In San Leon, Paul Horsten waited in line at the U.S. Post Office where sheriff's deputies handed out rations.

"It was devastating," said Horsten, who when he was 5 years old remembered a dike rupturing at his home in the Netherlands.

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