

Storms run Wabasso family out of own, borrowed homes

By Henry A. Stephens staff writer

WABASSO — Maurice and Jonethia Anderson sat on their car's hood Monday outside a house on 63rd Avenue that was their home for the past three weeks.

"It's all flooded, you name it," Anderson said. "The kids don't have anything to wear to school, nothing."

Hurricane Frances had destroyed their own home, sending them to live in a rental house owned by Liz Taylor, Jonethia's aunt.

But Hurricane Jeanne hit that home this time. The only difference was that the family didn't try to hunker down in the aunt's house and didn't see the destruction happening.

"We went to a cousin's home," Anderson said. "We knew this one wasn't going to last. (Sunday) we came and looked it over."

Covered in plaster from interior work, Anderson said he was planning to get water and ice from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's distribution center at the North County Aquatic Center.

As for help with the home, he said, that's still a wait. They haven't even been able to call FEMA, he said, because the phone lines are down.

Nearby, Jeanne knocked a pine tree on Garfield Andrews' property onto 63rd Avenue. So he and his neighbors took matters into their own hands — a chainsaw — to cut the tree into small pieces.

"I bet that pine is over 100 years old," he said.

"Frances had it leaning. But Jeanne took it out. I kind of knew it was going to happen. It was the only source of shade I had," Andrews said. Helping Andrews were his neighbors, Tommy Sanders and Edward Spencer, in the kind of community spirit — tackling a job before officials responded, which won praise from the county health department.

"We're getting this down so (Florida Power & Light Co.) can get electric in here," Andrews said.

"We don't want them to have to do this. We don't want anything in their way."