

*Title: Hell No We Won't Go!*



I'm sick of 'em. I've lived on the Gulf Coast most of my life, about... too many years.

Someone said, "what we need is a huge hurricane to hit dead center on Destin to blow away all the condos."

Zounds! How can anyone think such. When that happens they'll build back with a vengeance. Can you imagine giving developers a second chance to make more money?

We've lived over 50 years in this area, between Fort Walton Beach and Destin and now in Santa Rosa Beach and before that Mobile. Highway 98 was just two lanes, Beal Street wasn't paved yet and Eglin hadn't even dreamed of becoming a Parkway.

When we moved to Destin there was only one small grocery and an even smaller drugstore. Bill Jones would go down to the drug store and fill a prescription at two o'clock in the morning, then bring it to your house, if it was an emergency. No business was not so bad... he was so good.

These hurricanes, they say

we are in maybe a ten-year cycle of hell because of the El Nino? What? You say warm water thousands of miles away causes us to be in hell?

I remember when I was a kid. My folks fussed at me for getting excited about a storm coming. The same thing happened with my kids. What goes around comes around doesn't it? Anyway, even as a new husband and father I can remember sitting on the front porch during a hurricane watching the wind whip the trees around. I've been through more hurricanes than I care to count and couldn't if I tried.

Never, never, never have I witnessed nor seen or heard of so many storms hitting so close or raking where we live and with such destructive force as it did during he 11 months or so when hell broke lose.

I tell you if you don't believe in global warming, not withstanding the El Nino effect, you better believe if the next ten years are going to be like they were or worse, hell on earth is a good description.

Dammed if you do, Dammed if you don't... evacuate that is. The only time before Opal that I evacuated was during the atomic bomb scare, when Cuba had a missile. All Mobile got stuck in a traffic jam. That's when they invented the Interstate

Highway System, so they could land aircraft and move troops across the country if they needed to... or not.

Opal, knocked a huge tree on our roof in Destin and scared my wife to death in the pitch black of the night, with the wind howling. It felt like the house jumped three feet off the ground. We put out a bunch of pots and buckets to catch to rain as it came in from the damage, but it saved us from losing many treasures.

After moving to Santa Rosa Beach we decided to stay and have because of a previous and miserable experience of driving 16 hours to get to Tallahassee during a hurricane evacuation from Destin.

Now we sit in our plywood covered darkness not knowing if the world is still there, generator and small room air conditioner at hand just in case.

I don't know what the answer is. They keep saying people are stupid to stay and the people who go feel stupid for having gone.

Nevertheless, what kind of an idiot would pray for a direct hit of a hurricane? I would stick my finger in a thousand light sockets before I would wish that on anyone.

All I know is I keep hearin' It everywhere: "Hell no we won't go!"

**So what's next?**