
Interviewer

How much of the island was covered in water? Just give a sense of the devastation, but just in like two or three sentences. 01:35:50

Leon

Certainly. Ike hit Galveston in 2008. 01:35:58

Interviewer

Let me start again. Just call it hurricane Ike. 01:36:07

Leon

Hurricane Ike was was hit Galveston Island in 2008 and it was general 01:36:11

generally proportioned age wise with individuals. You would have to be 01:36:28

thirty five, forty five, years old and you wouldn't remember a hurricane 01:36:41

prior to that. That was as devastating as Hurricane Ike was. Hurricane Ike 01:36:41

flooded 75 percent of Galveston Island. And when I say flooded 75 01:36:54

percent of Galveston Island the north side of Broadway was 01:37:07

disproportionately hit, then the south side. The north side of Broadway 01:37:07

most of the houses got six seven eight feet of water. The south side of 01:37:14

Broadway some of them got three feet. Some of them got two feet. I got 01:37:17

one foot of water. So, the further south you went the better off you were 01:37:21

because Galveston has a seawall that 17 feet up in the air. So the water 01:37:35

actually runs downhill. Towards the north side. And those two waters met. 01:37:40

Interviewer

So can you, can you give the year of the hurricane again, but then say 01:37:48

that it was on the scale of maybe these other hurricanes that hit and what those years were.

Leon

Yeah. Hurricane Ike hit Galveston in 2008. It hit Galveston as a Category 3 01:38:01

hurricane. The year before there was Hurricane Rita. Which was 01:38:19

Leon (continued)

supposed to hit Galveston Island but went further east and hit in the
Beaumont Port Arthur area. And the only other hurricane that I can 01:38:32
remember that was as devastating as that was Hurricane Carla, which hit
in 1961. It was basically the same type of a hurricane as Hurricane Ike in 01:38:50
2008. Hurricane Carla, covered probably 40 percent of the island was 01:38:59
flooding. Hurricane Ike in 2008 covered 75 percent of the island which 01:39:05
was definitely devastating. You know in a hurricane it, it has no 01:39:16
economical separation. I was telling you that after Ike, the National Guard 01:39:33
had set up in front of...

Interviewer

Start that story again, but just don't say I was telling you. Just tell the 01:39:42
story straight up.

Leon

In after Ike I can remember that prior to Ike, like I said I had a contract 01:39:48
with the Galveston Historical Foundation. They had a thing called genteel 01:40:01
junk. And what my job was was when people wanted to donate things to 01:40:04
go around and pick up these donated items and they would normally they
would be antique type stuff and they would have a big sale of it. Well I 01:40:21
remember going to this lady's house and we picked up some real nice
things from her. You know she had a beautiful house. She and I talked for 01:40:29
a few minutes and brought it over and put it away. Well when Hurricane 01:40:38
Ike hit forty seven hundred Broadway is the Galveston Housing Authority.
They have a huge parking lot. So the National Guard set up where they 01:40:48
were distributing water and ice to individuals. And I was in this line like 01:40:58
everybody else to get water and ice. And the lady in front of me was the 01:41:03
lady that I had gone to her house probably two or three weeks earlier and

Leon (continued)

we were talking and she turned around and she said Leon, I never thought I'd be in a line like this. And she just broke down and started crying you know laid her head on my shoulders and I have this thing about me and God an out of my mouth came, "my God didn't make any mistakes." And, I guess I did it as one of these sly remarks because I knew her wealth and I knew my wealth. They weren't compatible at all. But here we are we are in the same spot. There's not a grocery store. There's nothing you can do about your situation. And there is nothing I can do about mine but stand in this line and take what somebody gives us. Just just a little idea of of Hurricane Ike and, how it didn't make any difference who you were. The devastation of it was that we're all equal when it comes to the good Lord's work. You know he, it doesn't matter to him whether you're rich or poor. And that was one of the things I really remem... it stuck in my mind because, her wealth didn't do anything for her. You know, being being a millionaire didn't help her. You know she was, right there in line with people who lived in Palm terrace and Seeder terrace which was public housing units with the maids and the butlers and cafeteria workers and the waitresses. She's in the same line with them you know and asking for the same thing they're asking for. A hand up, or hand out whichever you want to call it. You know.

Interviewer

And so thinking about hurricane Ike...