

**HURRICANE CHARLIE beat up ON FL 12 YEARS AGO!!**  
**I thought I would give you two personal stories,**  
**both about Shufflers, to remind you to take**  
**precautions!!!**

**THE IMPACT OF "CHARLIE" ON THE O'NEAL FAMILY AS TOLD BY**  
**MARGARET O'NEAL on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2004!! Margaret has since**  
**passed on. When you read her article below, I think all**  
**will agree that she was a capable writer.**



As I read Margaret's story, it became increasingly evident to me that "Charlie" was a Storm With a Difference!! Why don't I let Margaret tell it?? Margaret speaking in 2004.

*Hi Stan and Lois: We've been through quite a week. I had got used to thunder storms but this was something else!! There was no thunder or lightning~~just this loud wind blowing the rain sideways. Ed and I sat in our family room watching~~it was like no other storm I had ever seen. We saw our fence around the hot tub go down and then back up. Then I heard this loud noise and I said to Ed "what was that?" He answered: "we just lost our porch." It went straight up and over our roof. We found out Sat. that our neighbors across the street had seen it coming towards them ~~ but it went over their roof also, and landed two blocks down in a ditch. Thank heavens no one or no building was hurt. About this time we lost electricity and telephone.*

*We had no communication with the outside world for the next 48 hours except for the radio station in Orlando which never gave any highland county news. Saturday morning Ed went to Home Depot to see if he could buy us a generator ~~ there was already a line around the store so he gave up. We survived Saturday with no air conditioning, no stove etc. If we'd only had the little motor home we'd have been fine ~~ but surly the electric would come on by tomorrow???*

*Sunday a.m., and still no electricity so we went to the local grocery store to buy a local paper so we could at least see what was going on. The grocery store was working on generator but there were no gas stations open and of course no ATM's to get cash. By Sunday evening when we heard it could be a week before we got electricity, we*

decided to leave!! We had a 1/2 tank of gas in the little truck and about 4 gallons in our lawn mower tank ~~ enough we hoped, to get us to Lake county where they had gas. I knew I had to throw out every thing from the freezer so we packed freezer contents into garbage bags and placed the bags in the truck. Now the need to find a dumpster as we head for GA!! We drove up Hwy 27, witnessing so much destruction. As we drove by Camp Inn they were not letting any one in (everyone there had been ordered to evacuate.) There were no traffic lights operating so highway patrol was manning each intersection. We arrived at FL turnpike where the gas stations were open. Still no dumpster!! Our priority became a motel so we began our search. It was now well after dark so we found a motel checked in had a most welcome shower and good nights sleep, with air conditioning yet!!! But we still had all our garbage in the truck!!! Mon. a.m. ~~up early and off to dump our garbage it had to really stink by now!! And then off to GA where hopefully our cell phone would work and we could let our family know we were okay.... Arrived at our daughter's home and finally had communication but were still concerned on how things were at our FL residence. We still couldn't get hold of anyone in the Avon Park-Sebring area. Funny thing!!~~ We finally got hold of Ralph Day on his cell phone and so pleased ~~ only to discover he was in Detroit. We arrived home in Sebring Sat to see all the damage at Avon Park Shuffle Board courts. Our beautiful covered courts 6 were not usable. Margaret (O'Neal)

THE SHUFFLER thanks Margaret for this great story!!  
Stan and Alf 2004 08 26.