

# LOG of the *MIMI*



## CHAPTER 10 – WATTS BAR LAKE, TN

### Blue Springs Marina, Ten-Mile, TN – September, 2004

#### Watts Bar Lake

(M547.5) **Wednesday September 1, 2004 – Temple, TX & Blue Springs, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

**Temple: U70's-L90's - Partly Cloudy, Wind SE5-10kts**

**Blue Springs: U60's-L80's, Cloudy, Wind NW5kts, Light Fog early**

Our alarm goes off at 4:15am so we have time to make the 6:15am 1-stop flight to Knoxville; as we drive out the driveway, we discover its only 4:00am?? Somehow (probably Betty messing with my clock) the clock was set forward an hour! Rather than sit outside the airport terminal waiting for it to open, we opt to go back in the house, read the paper (which finally arrived) and drink more coffee; its going to be a long day!

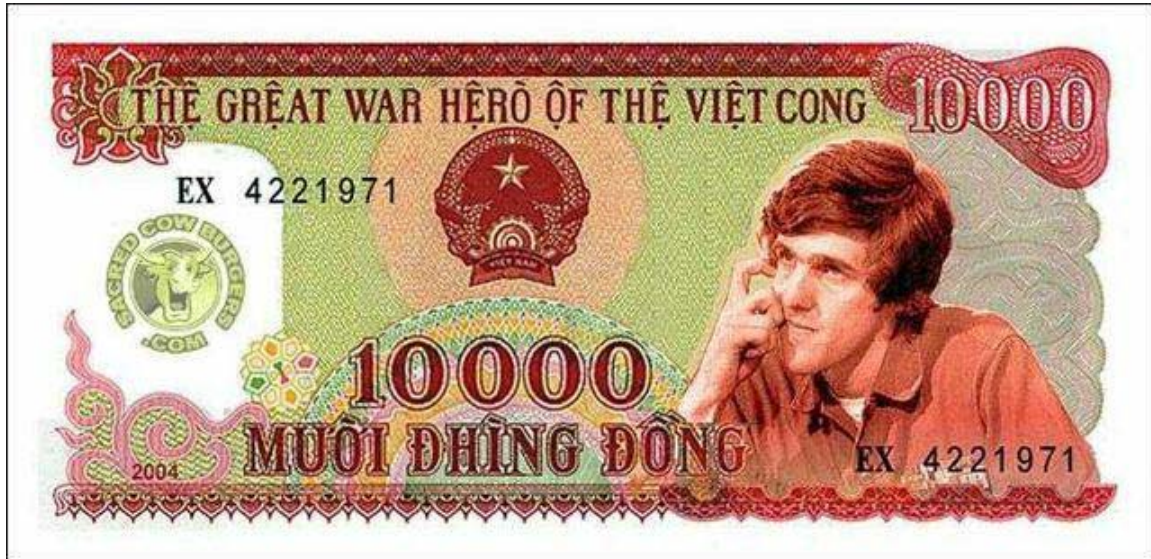
The American Eagle RJ flight is about 10 minutes early and of course Ralph is waiting for us and in the Expedition he has the makins for 'red beer,' atta baby! We've shopping to do and Target is our first of four stops. We wanted to see if Target was better than Wal-Mart or Kroger's and it wasn't; we ended up having to go to Wal-Mart to complete our list. While Ralph and I are grocery shopping, Betty is at Pier 1 to find wedding and wedding shower gifts for Ralph's granddaughter Stacy. Two hours of shopping is rounded out with a liquor store stop for wine. The expedition is full and we're anxious to get home to *MIMI*.

The Blue Springs crew washed *MIMI* this morning and she's beautiful; no spiders to be seen... until in the morning! We stock the boat with 3 cartloads of stuff... good exercise walking the ¼ mile each way to the parking lot! It's a lot to put away, including several orders of stuff that was shipped here. It's not hot, but we worked up a sweat and can't wait to take a dip in the lake; the water is warm but it's chilly when you get out.

Ralph grills steak and we dine on the *Loose Wire* patio with the Steidle's (Jeanne will join us tomorrow). The Steidle's returned Sunday, from a week in Cancun celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary with their family. Larry was 'attacked' by Montezuma and is still suffering from his 'revenge.' After dinner Betty and Janet watch the Cappriotti win her match at the U.S. Open but turned-in while Federer's match is still going. Larry & I joined Ralph on the *D.J. Explorer* to watch the third evening of the Republican Convention; it's in New York this time.

The Democrats convention was about a month ago in Boston; their over-riding themes were John F. Kerry's Viet Nam war record and Bush bashing. Kerry made his Viet Nam record an issue, presumably to counter George W. Bush's leadership in fighting terrorism, and his image as Commander and Chief.

Following the convention Kerry's record came under attack by a group of 'swift boat' Veterans who served during the same period of the war; they are raising money and campaigning against Kerry as a '527' group. A '527' group is any organization raising funds to promote or oppose political issues under the 'McCain-Feingold' act, which was passed in an attempt to make political campaigns more 'fair' and to control 'soft money' influence. Now Kerry is whining about the attack on his record and his public opposition to the war after he returned from Viet Nam. Most veterans resent his testimony about alleged atrocities by American servicemen.



'Vietnamese Currency'

Thus far, Republican convention speakers have been more dynamic, powerful, and convincing than the Democrats. Am I a conservative? Sure I am, however even liberal commentator's were saying as much. McCain and Guiliani spoke the first night; Guiliani is a great speaker, he makes you feel he's talking with you, rather than speaking to you. First Lady, Laura Bush and her daughters Jenna and Barbara spoke the second night along with California Governor, Arnold Swarzenegger who was surprisingly strong and appealed to fellow immigrants.

Tonight's speakers are the keynote speaker, Democratic Senator Zel Miller (D) Georgia and Vice President Dick Cheney. Senator Miller, a democrat, strongly supports Bush and gave an impassioned and forceful speech. He questioned Kerry's votes against military armament, asking "Mr. Kerry... what do you expect our soldiers to fight with... spit balls?? Cheney is a super smart guy but a little dry as a speaker. His presentation was good and the material excellent... just not as forceful as the other speakers. I like to watch him in interviews because he is so quick and his thoughtful answers so on point. I suspect his answers are what most only wish they could have thought of, at the moment, to say.

Betty sleeps in this morning... loosing an extra hour of sleep yesterday morning did her in. We learn that Neptunus canceled plans to send their service crew to Tennessee this week due to approaching category 4 hurricane 'Frances'. They were scheduled to service a Neptunus 62 in Chattanooga and then come to Blue Springs to change out the O-Ring seals on the leaking rudder shafts. The path of hurricane Frances is projected to hit the lower Florida east coast, dead on Dania, FL where Neptunus Florida office & shop is located and the entire area is being evacuated. Florida is taking a beating from this year's hurricanes.

#### **Thursday September 2, 2004, Docked, Blue Springs, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

U60's-L80's, Cloudy, Wind NW5kts, Light Fog early, Light Rain off & on

MIMI's Props are ready for pick-up, so Ralph and I drive to Soddy Daisy, TN, the trip made long by a detour and heavy rain... what else? For lunch we stop at a 'Mexican' restaurant... yeah, right... in Tennessee? Well the Corona was Mexican; otherwise it missed the mark by a long shot.

The props are beautiful; the job comes with a computer printout that is impressive... even if I don't understand any of it! On the way back we stop at Wal-Mart for a Mr. Clean wash down kit...the claim is that you can wash (car or boat) without drying and no water spots. It has a built-in filter and 'special' soap dispenser in the head that attaches to a water hose. We'll see... if it works at all, it is probably best suited for saltwater wash-off, which would be great if it works. We also find *Once upon a Time in the West* on DVD; starring Claudia Cardinal, Henry Fonda, Charles Bronson, and Jason Robards. By Sergio Leone, it's a great movie, though Betty doesn't have the taste or appreciation for the classic spaghetti western of all time.

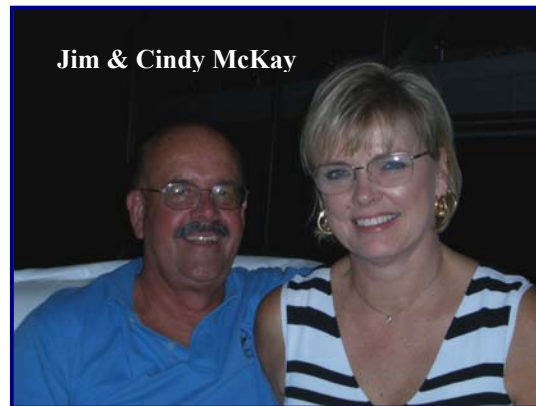
We decide not to stow the props on the boat until a decision is made on haul out for replacement of the rudder shaft seals; the 33" 4 blade props are heavy. Following great grilled burgers, Betty adjourns to watch the U.S. Open while Ralph and I watch the last night of the RNC. 'W' gave a strong speech and seemed to be having a good time. One of his best lines... "Some say I have a 'swagger,' in Texas we call it walking!" And another "I believe this nation wants steady, consistent, principled leadership – and that is why, with your help, we will win this election."

### **Friday September 3, 2004, Docked, Blue Springs, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

U60's-L80's, Cloudy, Wind NW5kts, Light Fog early, Light Rain off and on

**Hurricane 'Frances,'** a category 4 with 140 mph winds, is pounding the Bahamas and targeting a 300-mile stretch of the Florida east coast, from Florida City to Flagler Beach just north of Daytona. Some 2.5 million people have been told to evacuate. The good news is that it looks like Frances will miss the Keys completely. Coming just three weeks after 'Charlie' hit the west coast and traveled across Florida, 'Frances' is larger (1,000 miles across) and could conceivably do more damage. Forecasters are predicting the storms remnants could affect Tennessee as early as Tuesday with flash flooding, river flooding, winds of 25-30mph and tornadoes. **Criminal Trials** - Charges in the Kobe Bryant rape case have been dropped, but he now he faces a civil suit from his accuser... who apparently had sex following the alleged rape. There have been no new revelations in the Scott Peterson trial for murder of his wife Lacey and unborn son.

We take a swim... a cold one due to all the cool weather and rain. Later, Ralph (Spiderman) sprays *MIMI*'s slip for spiders to reduce the webs and 'droppings' on the boat. You've gotta do it about every other day to do any good. By cocktail hour the Labor Day crowd is coming in and Mc Kay motors over in *Maila*; it's going to be a great evening. Calm winds and the sun finally making an appearance and warms things up... a little.



We have grilled salmon and acorn squash for dinner followed by tennis for the girls and *Once Upon a Time in the West* for the boys... you've just gotta love 'harmonica.'

### **Saturday, September 4, 2004, Docked, Blue Springs, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

U60's-L80's, Cloudy, Wind NW5kts, Light Fog early, Light AM Rain off and on

**Hurricane Frances** - Downgraded to a category 2, 'Frances' is nearing the Florida east coast and is expected to come ashore with as much as 20" of rain as early as this afternoon. The heavy rain resulting from the 6mph slow moving storm, now packing 100+ miles per hour winds; down from 140 yesterday. **Former President Clinton** will undergo by-pass surgery next week. **Russian terrorists** - More than 200 are feared dead in Beslan, (southern) Russia where 100's of hostages had been held for 3 days. The stand-off began during a celebration marking the first day of the school year. Ten Arab terrorists were among 27 militants who were killed. The **Astro's** have won 7 straight games and 10 out of their last 11 putting them just 2 ½ games behind Chicago in the NL 'wild-card' standings. Roger 'Rocket' Clemons won his 325<sup>th</sup> game putting him ahead of former Astro great, Nolan Ryan.

By 1:00pm we're anchored in 'Martin's Branch' with the *DJ Explorer* rafted alongside. Hurricane 'Frances' is stationary just off the Florida east coast... and beating hell out of 'em. Some are beginning to think she's come to Florida to retire!

Da boy's swim and it's a 'hard day on the water.' Today is the prettiest day we've had this trip and most of our August trip here but because of the extended period of cold, clouds and rain, the water is cool and you don't stay in long. No boat projects today, we did some reading though; Betty a trash novel as usual, and I'm still reading Buffett... most of the book is about his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday trip to South America; piloting his Citation jet. Right now he's on the Amazon River at Manaus, Brazil. Following are some interesting facts about the Amazon (according to Buffett):

- The Amazon system is four thousand miles long but only rises 300 feet
- At its mouth, the Amazon is 160 miles wide
- The Amazon drains one sixth of the world's total freshwater runoff into the oceans
- Outflow at the mouth of the river, is 4.5 trillion gallons and could supply the drinking water for the entire United States for 5 months
- In volume of water, the Amazon is twelve times as large as the Mississippi
- There are pink dolphins in the Amazon

Ron Jones arrives around 5pm on his small cruiser *Moby Dick*. We do Grilled Pork tenderloin roast on the spit for supper, followed by the *Willie Nelson in Amsterdam* concert on DVD. It put Ralph down about half way through.

### **Sunday, September 5, 2004, Anchored, Martin's Branch, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

**U60's-L90's, Partly Cloudy Early then Clear, Wind Light & Variable**

It's a beautiful morning in the Tennessee Valley, however by Wednesday our weather is forecast to be affected by 'Frances' with lots of rain... what else? The eye of hurricane 'Frances' went ashore at 1am this morning near Stuart, Florida. Some areas are expected to receive up to 12" of rain and others as much as 20". The satellite image shows the storm virtually covering the state and the projected path is out into the Gulf and north to Apalachicola and inland hitting Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and up into Tennessee. All of this and a new hurricane, Ivan is building and appears to be heading toward Florida!

The raft-up builds to five boats as *Linda Ruth* (Art & Linda), *Jeanie Marie* (Jerry & Jean Steidle), and *Loose Wire* (Larry & Janet) arrive. What is it...? *Linda Ruth* and *Loose Wire* come in on one engine?? It made anchoring then rafting a little challenging but Captain Larry did a fine job and we were soon in the water enjoying one of the prettiest days on the Tennessee River this summer. Four sailboats are rafted up nearby and a couple of other singles as well.

'Martin's Branch' is large and well protected from wind and waves from holiday boaters on the river. It's a football weekend so armadas of Tennessee Volunteer fans cruise up to Knoxville for the game. It's a real cluster since boats outnumber boat slips by about 10 to 1 so they raft-up resulting in a lot of foot traffic across boats coming and going. Rafting is interesting in the river current and more interesting as boats depart at various times. In our 'Martin's Branch' raft-up things are much calmer; we make it until the half before crashing. It's a cloudless night with heavy dew.

## **Labor Day, 2004 – Martin’s Branch Anchorage**

**Monday, September 6, 2004, Anchored, Martin’s Branch, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

**L70’s-U80’s, Clear, Wind Light & Variable, Rain late**

**Labor Day, 2004. Hurricane ‘Frances’** – After moving into the Gulf the hurricane is regaining strength and moving slowly toward the panhandle of Florida. Early damage estimates are coming in at between \$2 and \$10 billion. With as many as six million people out of power, repair crews are coming in from as far away as Texas, to aid in restoring electricity. Tennessee is forecast to receive heavy rain from the storm by Wednesday, as the storm moves inland. **Hurricane ‘Ivan’** is in the Lesser Antilles with 120mph winds and tracking toward Puerto Rico, Cuba and Florida! **Russian terrorists** – The death count has risen 353, half of which were children and another 200 injured, in the Beslan, Russia school hostage by Chechen separatist’s tragedy. **Football** – Last night Tennessee beat UNLV last night, by a score of 42 to 17. Didn’t hear how the ‘Astro’s’ did. **Politics** – Unlike Kerry, Bush is getting a post convention ‘bounce’ as new polls indicate Kerry is falling with Bush at 51%, Kerry 42% and Nader 3%.

It’s a beautiful Labor Day to be on the water, but it signals the end of boating for many. Here, as nearly everywhere, boating activity drops dramatically after Labor Day, mysteriously many of yesterday’s boaters have headed in, and here in ‘Martin’s Branch’ the *MIMI* and *DJ Explorer* are the only boats remaining by early afternoon. The TVA has begun lowering the lake level in anticipation of heavy rainfall as the remnants of ‘Frances’ moves through the area, with the possibility of flooding.

**Tuesday, Sept. 7, 2004, Anchored, Martin’s Branch, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

**L70’s, Overcast, Wind North 10-15, Rain**

‘Frances’ is now affecting our local weather with rain and wind forecast to build during the day. We decide to head in and our plan to haul the *MIMI* to replace rudder shaft seals is put on hold until later in the week and hopefully calmer weather.

Its nice being under cover when it’s raining, the downside is the satellite TV dish can’t ‘see’ the satellite! With Betty’s addiction to ‘NET’ (never ending tennis) she is having a fit, so we rig a cable to a neighbors dock mounted satellite receiver. Betty’s happy!

**Wednesday, September. 8, 2004, Docked, Blue Springs, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

**L70’s, Overcast, Wind North 10-15, Rain**

It has now been raining a day and a half and forecast to continue through today; fortunately not much wind. The storm spawned numerous tornadoes in Georgia and the Carolina’s. ‘NET’ continues for Betty and I get some boat things done.

Larry & Janet have us over for dinner with the McKay’s and Dick; Jeanne is back home making arrangements (and worrying) for the bridal shower Saturday. The main course is Chicken Cordon Bleu and it was outstanding, along with everything else. We enjoyed Janet’s new toy... an old stereo console... that plays 8-track tapes of which she has a collection that includes some great Willie Nelson.

**Thursday, September. 9, 2004, Docked, Blue Springs, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

**U60’s, Partly Cloudy, Wind North 10**

**Hurricane ‘Frances’** – The clean-up continues with 3 million in Florida still without electricity and President Bush signed a \$2 billion disaster relief package for victims of ‘Frances’ and ‘Charlie.’ Meanwhile **Hurricane ‘Ivan’** is now a category V with 140mph winds and higher gusts destroyed 90% of the homes on Grenada and headed for Jamaica with a projected course toward the Florida Keys. **Houston Astros** – Won their 12<sup>th</sup> in a row yesterday, hitting 4 homer’s in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning and beating the Cincinnati Reds 5-2. They have won 20 out of 23 since August 15<sup>th</sup> for the best record during that period in baseball. second in the NL Central Division, they are 17 games behind St. Louis, and a half game ahead of Chicago

in the NL wild card race. **Ridiculous Item** – Presidential poll by Braun Research, Inc. for the American Kennel Club. By 51-27% respondents prefer a German shepherd to a Scottish terrier in the White House... Kerry has a shepherd. Bush prevailed on two items... 44-37% on “which candidate’s administration would be best for the happiness of your dog” and 51-37% on “which candidate would you trust most to walk your dog.” Translation: Republicans may win because Bush exudes confidence or they could loose because he will be perceived as spending too much time during the next 4 years walking dogs.

We’re unable to reach Neptunus in Florida to see when they are coming to fix the rudder shaft leaks, so we decide to do the job and by 9:00am *MIMI* is being hauled-out. As with the haul-out to change prop’s, the lift could only raise her about a foot out of the water! It’s not a difficult job and we’re back in our slip by 11:30am. The shafts had obviously been leaking since day one; the O-Ring was missing from each shaft and the port shaft seal was blown-out. Now the real work begins... cleaning the mess created by the slow leaks. The aft bilge was in pretty bad shape and a number of hydraulic fittings were covered in rust. The clean up, including hand pumping to dry-out took five hours. The bilge pumps do not have check valves to prevent back-flow when the pump cuts-off so there is no way to dry bilges. The hard part with using a hand pump is carrying buckets of bilge water up the ladder to dispose of... its work!

While I’m doing the dirty work... Betty watches ‘NET’ and Andre Agassi looses to Andy Roddick. Everyone was pulling for Andre. He’s a good guy and he’s getting old but still not ready to quit. The hard, nasty job is finished in time for cocktails... as a reward Ralph brings Bombay Sapphire Gin for martinis. After a dinner of left-over’s... nice job Betty that included some Chicken Cordon Bleu... thanks Janet, Jim & Cindy drop by for ADD’s. It’s a beautiful evening in Blue Springs.

### **Friday, September 10, 2004, Docked, Blue Springs, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

**U60’s-U70’s, Partly Cloudy, Wind Light & Variable**

More work on today’s agenda... the dinghy, on a trailer for a month while getting a new cover was being made, is filthy and will be washed and returned to *MIMI*’s transom lift. The new cover is perfect... it has a ratcheting drawstring and ribs that prevent water ponding. Plus the spare props will be stowed in the engine room. By end of the day, ‘*MIMI*’ will be ready for our cruise from Blue Springs to Kentucky Lake, later this month.



**Hurricane ‘Ivan’** is heading for Jamaica with sights on the Florida Keys. Our friends Butch & Cathy Niebur are evacuating from Marathon and heading for Georgia... good plan. No word from Jim & Jane Rifkin but we heard they left *Sanborn* at Solomon Island on the Patuxent River (Chesapeake Bay tributary) and drove back to Marathon to continue work on their condo. No word from Tom and Marie Smith on what they’re doing... they had planned on spending the summer at Faro Blanco. Marc & Cindy Snowwhite are in Tarpon Springs and were spared any damage from both ‘Charlie’ and ‘Frances’... we hope their luck holds because ‘Ivan’ appears to have the area in his sights.

We have grilled pizza tonight... thanks Bob & Sue Grote for the idea. It was great, except Betty didn’t put out enough cheese... otherwise she did good with the ‘makins!’

## **9/11 – “We Will Never Forget”**

### **Saturday, September 11, 2004, Docked, Blue Springs, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

**U60’s-L80’s, Clear, Wind Light & Variable, Light Fog until 9:00am**



Several hours of 9/11 specials on TV this morning... it's still so emotional. Fox News re-ran their live coverage of 9/11; some of the images should be televised on a regular basis, else some may forget.

**Hurricane 'Ivan'** – 'Ivan the terrible' passed by Jamaica this morning and knocked out all communication with the island for hours. **Astros** after 12 straight wins have lost 2 in a row to the Pirates.

Cindy McKay picked-up Betty this morning for the drive to Cleveland, TN for Stacy's wedding shower. Still more boat chores ... as we fly back to Texas tomorrow and there's many 'MIMI' boat things to do, notwithstanding the wash (2 hours) and grill cleaning (1 hour). By evening, 'Ivan' was upgraded to a category 4, with winds of 165mph and heading for Grand Cayman Island. The forecast path is a little more to the northwest and it's beginning to look as if the Key's may be spared a direct hit, while the panhandle may not.

#### **Sunday, September 12, 2004, Docked, Blue Springs, Watts Bar Lake, TN**

**Blue Springs:** U60's-L80's, Partly Cloudy, Wind Light & Variable, Fog until 9:00am

**Temple, TX:** L70's-M80's, Partly Cloudy, Wind Light & Variable

Heavy rain came as a surprise last night around 10:00pm... it only lasted about 30 minutes but we received a good amount of rain. **Hurricane 'Ivan'** – He's moving slowly and downgraded to category 4 with 145mph winds and nearing Grand Cayman, Island. We're hoping the storm tracks a little more to the west to spare Marathon and the Keys. **Lonhorns Football** – Texas beat Arkansas last night 22 – 20.

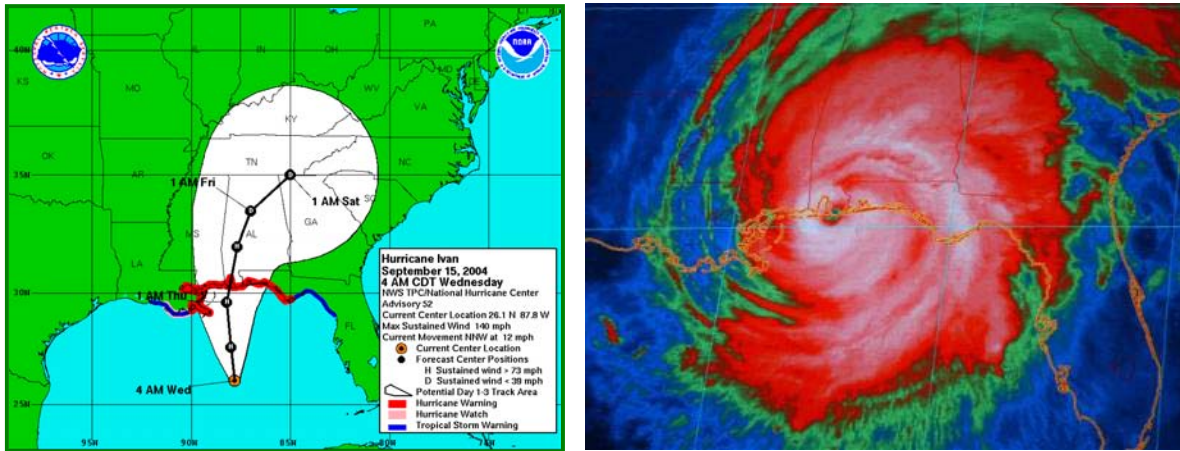
Final departure preparations are complete and we're off for Knoxville by 10:00am and back in Texas by 4:30pm, not bad even with the hour gained.

#### **Monday-Friday, September 13 - 16, 2004, Temple, Texas**

**Temple, TX:** L70's-M80's, Partly Cloudy, Wind Light & Variable

**Dallas Cowboys** – Loose their opener to the Vikings, 35 – 17... ugh! **Hurricane 'Ivan'** – Back up to a category 5, Ivan's projected track has shifted west, the Keys alert has been downgraded to a tropical storm warning, and it appears landfall will be in the vicinity of Mobile, AL and Pensacola, FL. In Pensacola, friends Jon & Sandy Franz have moved their 30' cruiser up the Escambia River to a small marina, charging \$100/day. and will evacuate their 18<sup>th</sup> floor condo tomorrow morning.

During the week, Ivan weakened to category 4 and early Thursday, slammed ashore at Gulf Shores, AL with winds of 130 mph and up to 200 mph gusts, triggering deadly tornadoes and a powerful punch of waves and rain that threatened to swamp communities from Louisiana to the Florida Panhandle. So far, at least 12 deaths with many unaccounted for were blamed on the storm.



Many of the millions of Gulf Coast residents who spent a frightening night in shelters and boarded-up homes were emerging Thursday morning to find that Ivan was not the catastrophe they had feared. Still, forecasters said the worst could be yet to come, as up to 15 inches of rain were expected as the storm moved inland. A new tropical storm 'Jeanne' is approaching the Bahamas the track could curve out into the Atlantic but will be a few days before it is better defined.

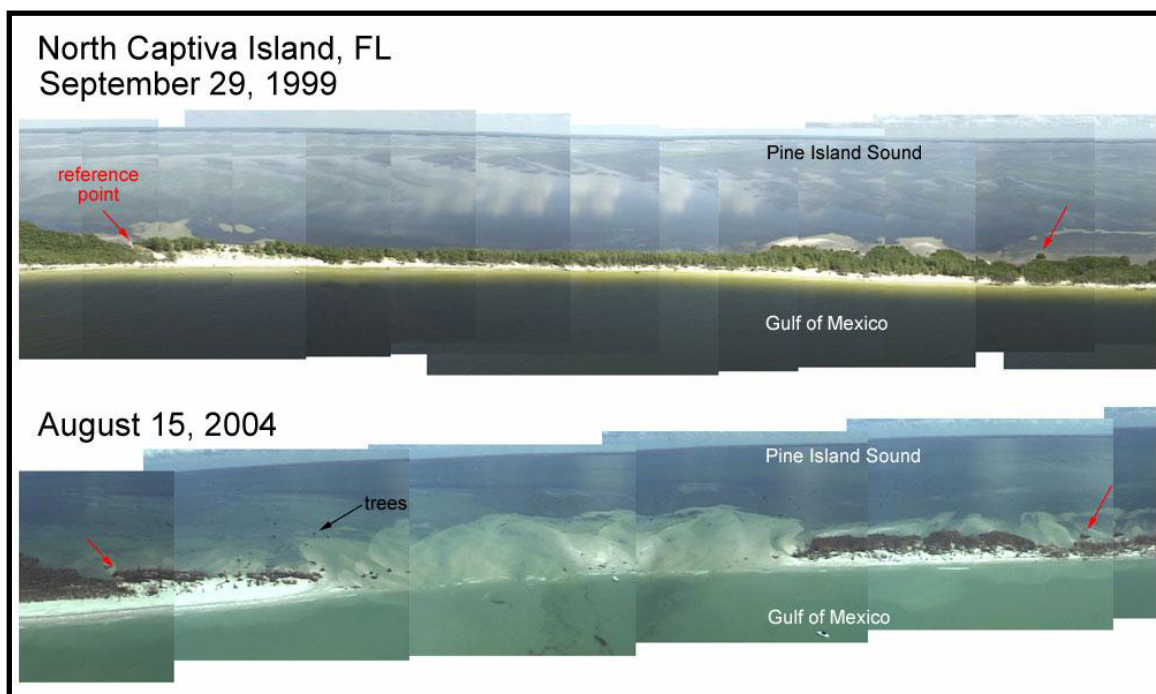
The pictures of the aftermath are depressing; total devastation, looks like a war zone were repeated comments by the media and those interviewed. The storm with twenty foot seas and eighteen foot storm surge obliterated miles of white sand beach and destroyed homes, businesses and infrastructure, including the Interstate 10 Escambia bay bridge. Twenty-seven tornadoes were spawned inland by Ivan, with heavy flooding as far away as Atlanta.

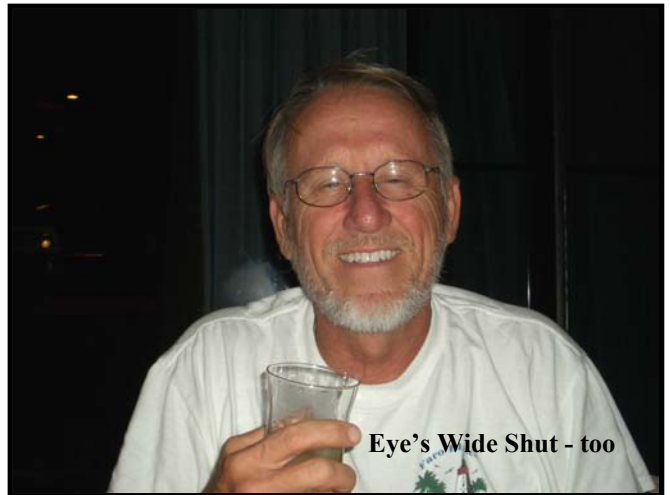
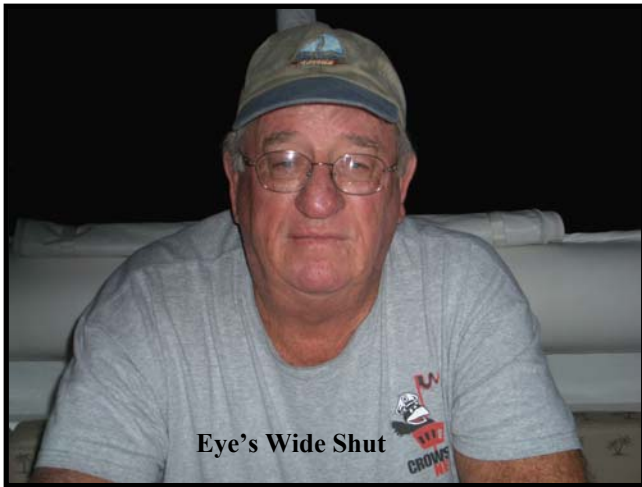
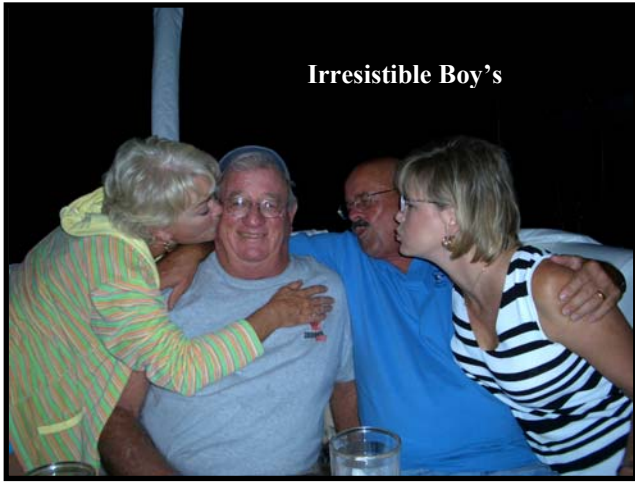
In all, Ivan is blamed for more than 70 deaths with 40 known dead in the U.S. and millions without electric service. We've had no word from our friends or Jim & Cindy McKay who own a condo & keep a trawler at Orange Beach. Jon & Sandy Franz (Pensacola) are holed-up in a Pensacola Ramada Inn (inside room) and are okay. Most phones are out, including cell phones (the towers were all blown down) but they were able to reach family in Texas by pay phone. They've tried to return to check on their condo and home which recently sold but hasn't closed, and authorities turned them back and were told it may be several weeks before they can return. One can only imagine how their lives have been disrupted and how helpless they must feel. Once things return to some semblance of normal, untangling insurance matters, making repairs and returning to normal daily routine will surely require months.

Photo Gallery



Above Left: Pensacola Marina, Center: Escambia Bay Bridge, Right: Gulf Breeze to Pensacola Beach Causeway.  
Below: Hurricane Charlie wiped out a portion of North Captiva Island at Pine Island Sound







**Sandy & Jon Franz's 18<sup>th</sup> floor condo is in the tall building on Pensacola Beach.  
'Sabine Beach Marina' is where we stayed in May while visiting the Franz's.  
The Marina's are empty except for a partially submerged sailboat.  
Below: Wood frame construction destroyed between concrete structures.**





**Top: Tennessee River Ivan flooding of Blue Springs Marina.**

**Right: Ivan in the Gulf of Mexico and heading for the Florida panhandle.**

**Bottom: 'Mean Jeanne,' Florida's 4 hurricane in 6 weeks is tracking for the east coast and forecast to arrive on Sunday, September 26th**

