

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE

Interviewees: **Megan Moore**

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Interviewer: Roberta Terrell

Transcriber: Megan Moore

Comments: Part of an Oral History Fair, at George Memorial Library, for possible inclusion in the Fort Bend County Museum's exhibit, *Tropical Impressions*.

7 Pages



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Transcript

TERRELL: This is an oral history for the Fort Bend County Historical Commission. This is Roberta Terrell interviewing Megan Moore on June 28, 2014 at the George Library in Richmond, Texas. Today we are discussing storm experiences. Some of your comments may be used to accompany the Fort Bend County Museum's upcoming exhibit entitled, *Tropical Impressions*. So we're going to get started. Megan, tell me, please about your storm-related experience.

MOORE: My story is about Hurricane Ike. And I don't remember the exact date but I was working here at George Memorial Library, as a part timer, it was 2008 (laughs). I had just gotten my library degree, but I was still working part time. And I remember being very, very afraid leading up to the storm. I had a lot of anticipation; not knowing what might happen bothered me. I hadn't really lived through that many horrible storms, so I was very nervous. I left work early to go help my parents prepare the house. We lived in Sugar Land at the time. I remember just being very afraid. I did sleep through the storm that night (laughs).

TERRELL: You weren't too afraid. (both laugh)

MOORE: Storms are sort of relaxing – the actual noise of the storm doesn't bother me. I think it's the preparation leading up to a hurricane that bothers me the most.

TERRELL: How'd you prepare?

MOORE: I remember getting a lot of water ready. At the time, we had six cats living in the house with us, so of course, there's concern for food and water for the family, but SIX cats is a lot of cats to have water for, and food and all of that. So we were concerned about the cats.

TERRELL: Do you have children?

MOORE: No. I was living with my parents at the time. I bought a house a few months after Hurricane Ike, but at the time I was living in Sugar Land with my parents. Just me and mother and father and our six cats (with humor). So we gathered a lot of water. I remember filling the bathtubs with water so that if we did run out, we could scoop from there.

After the storm hit, I remember all of our fences were down, and we had a neighbor on the backside -- our back yards were against each other. And that fence was down, and he, had a generator which he graciously let us borrow from time to time. He would unplug his, and we would plug in our refrigerator, or whatever. So we cooked up all the food we had, so that we could then have it cold. Like, we cooked all the raw chicken that we had and saved it. And I remember having a big barbeque – everyone on the block that we were friends with came over and it was a real bonding experience. And for me, that was the good side about Hurricane Ike, we got to see a lot of our friends and neighbors. One of my best friend's fathers lived on the other side of the block from us, and we had had a falling out. We hadn't been speaking to each other, and I don't remember why – that was so long ago. But I remember after the fences came down she walked over from her dad's house and we squashed our differences and that's really what I take away from Ike, is the bringing people together.



Sky before Hurricane Ike

TERRELL: Can you tell me your overall feelings about acts of nature? Do you feel powerless or empowered?

MOORE: Well I definitely don't feel empowered by them, but not necessarily powerless either. And I've had a debate with family in California, where they have earthquakes and mudslides, and I always feel like I'd rather take a hurricane over any other act of nature because you can see it coming. Yes, it scares me, but you can prepare for it. When I think about other things, like tornados and earthquakes, they scares me way more than a hurricane, 'cuz you can't see it coming.

TERRELL: That's true. Do you have a spiritual belief? Did that help you?

MOORE: No, it didn't really play a part for me, specifically.

TERRELL: Ok. What about your level of anticipation? Were you frightened?

MOORE: I was very frightened. That's the scariest part for me. You know, we were here, at the library, the day before the storm hit. I was working here, so we were wrapping our computers and doing our regular library hurricane preparedness. And I think that frightened me more than anything, because we go to such great lengths to prepare, just in case. And even though something very rarely happens, we wrap every computer and unplug all the cords. All of that scared me more than anything else.

TERRELL: What did they do with the glass in the library?

MOORE: Nothing. I don't think we did anything to the glass. It's really just about protecting the technology because that's more expensive to replace. This building is made up of glass! (laughs). It's all glass, so it is kind of frightening when a storm's actually hitting and you're in this building, you can hear the glass shaking.

TERRELL: Moving?

MOORE: Yes. So it can be frightening (with humor).

TERRELL: Yeah. How long have you lived in Fort Bend County?

MOORE: I have lived in Fort Bend County since 1989, I believe, is when we moved here. I was four or five.

TERRELL: Where did you move from?

MOORE: We were in Alaska. But we were originally from California. My dad's in oil, so, we were in Anchorage before.

TERRELL: Follow the oil?

MOORE: Yes.

TERRELL: If another hurricane came would you prepare any differently?

MOORE: Oh yes.

TERRELL: What would you do differently?

MOORE: Well now, you know, I'm a homeowner now, and I'm married now, and so I feel that together, my husband and I would be better prepared. He's the more responsible one, so he would probably make sure that we had all of the supplies that we needed. We have five cats in our little (laughing) house. We're crazy cat-people. I just feel like we would be more prepared now because we're older and are homeowner's.

TERRELL: Well they also prepare a list, you can get a list from the Red Cross or from the Houston Chronicle or from HEB. They pretty much tell you what you need to do.

MOORE: We have a few supplies, but we probably need a lot more than what we have. But we do live very close to a fire and police station and an elementary school, so I think we're on a good grid. I think we'd get power up relatively quickly. But I do worry about food and water. I should probably go get prepared after this interview (laughing).

TERRELL: You need to be prepared.

MOORE: (laughing)

TERRELL: I'm prepared. Can you think of anything else you'd like to add?

MOORE: The only thing I think I'd like to add is that, all things considered, I think we're in a pretty good spot. If we were to be hit we're far enough inland that I don't think we would have to worry too much. I mean, we're no New Orleans.

TERRELL: Well they consider us a pass-through county. The evacuees from the coast would pass through Fort Bend County. So does that comfort you?

MOORE: Yeah.

TERRELL: Or do you think you'd like to move out?

MOORE: No, I like where I'm at. I think we're close enough, but far enough also, that I

don't think we'd be in any major danger.

TERRELL: I hope not.

MOORE: (laughs)

TERRELL: Ok. Well this is going to conclude our interview if you cannot think of something else you would like to share.

MOORE: Well I have a little bit of a story.

TERRELL: Tell your story.

MOORE: Well, when we first moved here, and I don't remember the name of the storm or what year it was because I was so small. I was very, very young. Probably four or five, when we first moved here. My dad was away on a business trip. So it was just my mom, me, my brother and sister and our four cats. I talk about my cats a lot (with humor)!

TERRELL: Well that's ok.

MOORE: We had just moved here recently, again, from a place where there were no hurricanes, Alaska. And so my dad said, "You need to evacuate". And so my mom gathered all four of the cats, all three of the kids and herself, and we evacuated to Dallas, and she said it was the worst experience she's ever been through – the traffic and just the – the trauma of evacuating – of all those people on the road. And we've never evacuated since then. We stay put.

TERRELL: Well, one of the ladies interviewed said that Rita was a mandatory evacuation. Do you remember that?

MOORE: I was actually in college in San Marcos when Rita and Katrina hit. But I do remember, now that you mention Rita. Rita happened very close to one of my friend's birthdays, and she was still here in Houston. So me and my friend in San Marcos said, well we're gonna go visit our friend for her birthday, kind of oblivious to the storm because in San Marcos we weren't in any danger at all. So I remember calling my mom and saying, "Oh, Emily and I are heading down for the weekend". And she said, "No you're not!!" (laughing). She said, "You stay put".

TERRELL: Yeah, not worried about you (laughs).

MOORE: Yeah, and so that made ME scared and I was trying to urge THEM to evacuate 'cuz I was scared for them. But my grandmother was visiting and it just wasn't a good idea to try to evacuate with the multiple cats, plus the elderly grandmother, so they stayed put. But yeah, just thinking, 'well, we're coming for the weekend...' 'NO, we weren't' (laughs).

TERRELL: Well, ok. Well, this concludes our interview. I enjoyed it very much, and appreciate you coming.

Interview ends.